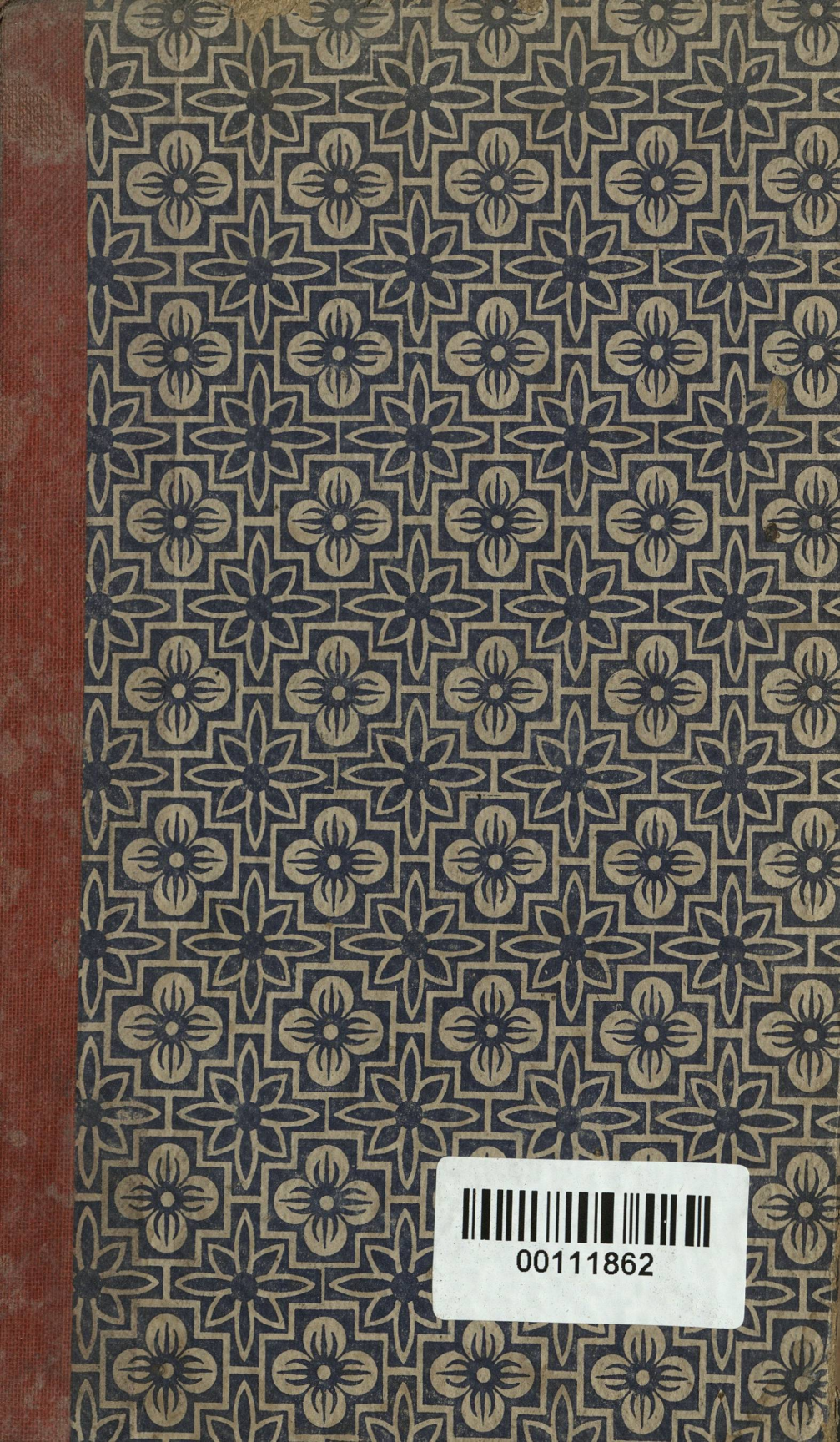
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ON

# THE OLD TESTAMENT.

BY

C. F. KEIL, D.D., AND F. DELITZSCH, D.D.,

PROFESSORS OF THEOLOGY.

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# INTRODUCTION

TO

# THE PROPHETICAL HISTORIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE *thorah*, or five books of Moses, which contains an account of the founding of the Old Testament kingdom of God, and the laws which were given through Moses, is followed in the Hebrew canon by the writings of the "earlier prophets," נביאים ראשונים, *prophetæ priores*. This collective name is given to the four historical books of *Joshua*, *Judges*, *Samuel*, and *Kings*, which trace, in the light of divine revelation, and of the gradual unfolding of the plan of salvation, the historical development of this kingdom of God from the death of Moses, the mediator of the old covenant, or from the entrance of the people of Israel into the land of Canaan promised to their fathers, till the dissolution of the kingdom of Judah, and the Babylonian captivity; the whole embracing a period of nearly nine hundred years. The names given to these books are taken from the men whom the God-king of Israel called and appointed at different times as the leaders and rulers of His people and kingdom, and indicate, very suitably on the whole, the historical periods to which the books refer.

The book of *Joshua* describes the introduction of the people of Israel into the promised land of Canaan, through the conquest effected by Joshua, and the division of the land among the tribes of Israel. As Joshua only completed what Moses had commenced but had not been permitted to carry out, on account of his sin at the water of strife (Num. xx. 12); and as he had not only been called by the Lord, and consecrated by the laying on of the hands of Moses, to accomplish this work, but had also been favoured with direct revelations from God, and with His miraculous help in the

execution of it; the book which is named after him, and contains the account of what he did in the power of the Lord, is more closely related to the Pentateuch, both in its form and contents, than any other book of the Old Testament. In this respect, therefore, it might be regarded as an appendix, although it was never actually joined to it so as to form part of the same work, but was from the very first a separate writing, and simply stood in the same dependent relation to the writings of Moses, as that in which Joshua stood to Moses himself, of whom he was both the servant and successor.

The book of *Judges* embraces the period of 350 years, from the death of Joshua to the rise of Samuel as a prophet of the Lord; that is to say, the time appointed to the people of Israel to establish themselves in the complete and sole possession of the land that had been given them for an inheritance, by fighting against the Canaanites who remained in the land and exterminating them, and, when settled in this inheritance as the congregation of the Lord, to set up the covenant concluded with God at Sinai, and to maintain and build up the kingdom of God according to the principles and ordinances, the laws and rights, prescribed by Moses in the law. The Lord had promised His help to the covenant nation in carrying on the conflict with the remaining Canaanites, on condition that they adhered with fidelity to His covenant, and willingly obeyed His commandments. It was but very imperfectly, however, that the tribes of Israel observed these conditions, which had been earnestly impressed upon their hearts, not only by Moses, but also by Joshua before his death. They soon grew weary of the task of fighting against the Canaanites and destroying them, and contented themselves with making them merely tributary; in fact, they even began to form friendships with them, and worship their gods. As a punishment for this, the Lord gave them over to their enemies, so that they were repeatedly oppressed and deeply humiliated by the Canaanites, and the nations that were living round about Canaan. But whenever they repented and turned again in their distress to the Lord their God, He raised up helpers and deliverers for them in the persons of the judges, whom He filled with the power of His Spirit, so that they smote the enemy, and delivered both the people and the land from their oppression. But inasmuch as in every instance the judge was no sooner dead than the people fell into idolatry again, they sank deeper and deeper into bondage to the heathen, the theocratic constitution fell more and more into decay, and the life of the nation as a religious community was rapidly

coming to an end. This constant alternation, of apostasy from the Lord to the Canaanitish Baals and Astartes and the consequent punishment by deliverance into the power of their enemies on the one hand, and of temporary return to the Lord and deliverance by the judges out of their bondage on the other, which characterizes the post-Mosaic period of the Israelitish history, is clearly set forth in the book of Judges, and placed distinctly before the eye in separate pictures of the various oppressions and deliverances of Israel, each one being complete in itself, and the whole arranged in chronological order. Whilst the book of Joshua shows how the Lord fulfilled His promise to Israel with a mighty arm, and led His people into the land promised to the fathers, the book of Judges shows how Israel continually broke the covenant of its God in the land which He had given it for an inheritance, and thus fell into bondage to its foes, out of which the judges were not able to secure it a permanent deliverance; so that the Lord was obliged to create a new thing in Israel, in order to carry out His purpose of salvation, and to found and erect His kingdom in Canaan, through the medium of the children of Israel. This new thing consisted in the institution of prophecy as promised by Moses, or rather in the introduction of it into the political and national life, as a spiritual power by which it was henceforth to be pervaded, guided, and controlled; as neither the judges, nor the priests as custodiers of the sanctuary, were able to uphold the authority of the law of God in the nation, or turn the idolatrous nation to the Lord. It is true we meet with certain prophets as early as the times of the judges; but the true founder of the Old Testament prophecy (*prophetenthums*, prophethood) was Samuel, with whom the prophets first began their continuous labours, and the prophetic gift was developed into a power which exerted an influence, as strong as it was salutary, upon the future development of the Israelitish state.

The books of *Samuel* contain the history of Israel from the appearance of Samuel as a prophet to the end of the reign of David, and include the renewal of the theocracy by the labours of Samuel, and the establishment of the earthly monarchy by Saul and David. At the close of the period of the judges, when the ark of the covenant had fallen into the hands of the Philistines, and the removal of this visible symbol and substratum of the presence of God from the tabernacle had caused the central sanctuary of the congregation to lose all its significance as the place where God manifested himself, and when the judgments of God had even fallen upon the

members of the high-priesthood itself, in the death of Eli and his worthless sons, when the word of Jehovah was dear, and there was little prophecy to be found (1 Sam. iii. 1),—the Lord raised up Samuel, the son of the pious Hannah, who had been asked for of the Lord and consecrated to His service from his mother's womb, to be His prophet, and appeared to him continually at Shiloh; so that all Israel acknowledged him as the prophet appointed by the Lord, and through his prophetic labours was converted from dead idols to serve the living God. In consequence of this conversion, the Lord gave to the Israelites, in answer to Samuel's prayer, a complete and wondrous victory over the Philistines, by which they were delivered from the heavy oppression they had endured for forty years at the hands of these foes. From that time forward Samuel judged all Israel. But when he had grown old, and his sons, who had been appointed by him as judges, failed to walk in his steps, the people desired a king to judge them, to go before them, and to conduct their wars. In accordance with the command of God, Samuel chose Saul the Benjamite as king, and then laid down his own office as judge. He continued, however, to the very end of his life to labour as a prophet, in and through the schools of the prophets, which he had called into existence for the strengthening and confirmation of Israel in its fidelity to the Lord; and not only announced to King Saul his rejection by God, on account of his frequent resistance to the divine command, as made known to him by the prophet, but anointed David to be his successor as king over Israel. He died at the close of the reign of Saul, and did not live to see the accession and reign of David, with which the second book of Samuel is occupied. The reason why the name of Samuel is given to both these books, which form, both in style and contents, an indivisible whole, is in all probability therefore, that Samuel not only inaugurated the monarchy in Israel by anointing Saul and David, but exerted so decided an influence upon the spirit of the government of both these kings, through his prophetic labours, that even the latter may be regarded in a certain sense as the continuation of that reformation of the Israelitish state which the prophet himself began. It was in David that the true king of the kingdom of God under the Old Testament arose,—a mighty warrior in conflict with the enemies of Israel, and yet at the same time a pious servant of the Lord,—a man of true humility and faithful obedience to the word and commandment of God, who not only raised the state to a lofty height of earthly power and glory,

through the strength and justice of his rule, but who also built up the kingdom of God, by reviving and organizing the public worship of God, and by stimulating and fostering the true fear of God, through the cultivation of sacred song. When God had given him rest from all his enemies round about, he wished to build a temple to the Lord. But God did not grant him this desire of his heart: He gave him a promise, however, instead, viz. that He would build him a house, and establish the throne of his kingdom for ever; and that He would raise up his seed after him, who would build a house to the name of the Lord (2 Sam. vii.). This promise formed not only the culminating point in the life and reign of David, but the indestructible basis for the further development of the Israelitish state and kingdom, and was not only a sure pledge of the continuance of the Davidic monarchy, but a firm anchor of hope for the covenant nation in all time to come.

Lastly, the books of *Kings* carry on the history of the Old Testament kingdom of God through a period of 450 years, viz. from the accession of Solomon to the Babylonian captivity, and furnish the historical proof that the promise given by the Lord to His servant David was stedfastly fulfilled. Notwithstanding the attempt of Adonijah to usurp the throne, He preserved the whole of the kingdom of David to his son Solomon, who had been chosen as his successor, and at the very commencement of his reign renewed His promise to him, so that Solomon was able to carry out the work of building the temple; and under his wise and peaceful government in Judah and Israel every one could sit in safety under his own vine and fig-tree. But when Solomon allowed himself to be drawn away by his foreign wives to turn from the Lord and worship idols, the Lord chastened him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; but His mercy did not depart away from him, as He had promised to David (2 Sam. vii. 14, 15). After Solomon's death, the ten tribes, it is true, revolted from the house of David, and founded a kingdom of their own under Jeroboam; but one tribe (Judah along with Benjamin) remained with his son Rehoboam, and along with this tribe the capital, Jerusalem, and the temple. During the whole time that this one brother-nation was divided into two distinct kingdoms, which were frequently engaged in hostility with one another, the Lord preserved the throne to the seed of David; and the kingdom of Judah survived the kingdom of the ten tribes of Israel 134 years, having as firm a political foundation in the unbroken suc-

cession of the royal family of David, as it had a strong spiritual foundation in the capital Jerusalem, with the temple which had been sanctified by the Lord as the dwelling-place of His name. In the kingdom of the ten tribes, on the other hand, Jeroboam introduced the germ of what eventually led to its destruction, by establishing as the state religion the unlawful worship of the golden calves. The destruction of his house was at once foretold to him on account of this sin (1 Kings xiv. 7); and this threat was carried out in the person of his son (1 Kings xv. 28 sqq.). As the kings of Israel who followed did not desist from this sin of Jeroboam, but, on the contrary, the dynasty of the house of Omri attempted to make the worship of Baal the leading religion of the kingdom, and the king and people gave no heed to the voice of the prophets, and did not return with sincerity of heart to the Lord, He gave up the sinful kingdom and people to the consequences of their sins, so that one dynasty overthrew another; and after the lapse of 250 years, the kingdom, which was already shattered by the frequently recurring civil wars, fell a prey to the Assyrians, by whom the whole land was conquered, and its inhabitants were led into captivity. The kingdom of Judah was also hard pressed by this powerful empire, and brought to the very verge of destruction; but in answer to the prayer of the pious king Hezekiah, it was delivered and preserved by the Lord for His own and His servant David's sake, until at length the godless king Manasseh filled up the measure of its sins, so that even the good king Josiah could only suspend the destruction for a certain time, but could not ward it off altogether. A short time after his death the judgment fell upon Judah and Jerusalem on account of the sins of Manasseh (2 Kings xxiii. 26, 27, xxiv. 3), when King Nebuchadnezzar came from Babylon, conquered the land, and laid it waste; and having taken Jerusalem, led away Jehoiachim to Babylon, with a considerable portion of the people. And when even Zedekiah, who had been raised by him to the throne, rebelled against him, the Chaldeans returned and put an end to the kingdom of Judah, by destroying Jerusalem and burning the temple, Zechariah himself being deprived of his sight, and led away into captivity with a large number of prisoners. Yet even when Judah and its king were rejected and scattered among the heathen, the Lord did not leave His servant David without any light shining; but after Jehoiachim had been in prison for thirty-seven years, paying the penalty of his own and his father's sins, he was released from his imprisonment by Evil-merodach, the king of

Babylon, and his seat was placed above the seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon (2 Kings xxv. 27–30). This joyful turn in the destinies of Jehoiachim, with which the books of Kings are brought to a close, throws the first gleam into the dark night of the captivity of that better future which was to dawn upon the seed of David, and through it upon the people of Israel when they should be delivered out of Babylon.

These four historical writings have been very justly called *prophetical books of history:* not, however, because they all, but more especially the books of Samuel and the Kings, give very full accounts of the labours of the prophets in Israel; nor merely because, according to the early Jewish tradition, they were written by prophets; but rather because they describe the history of the Old Testament covenant nation and kingdom of God in the light of the divine plan of salvation, setting forth the divine revelation, as it was accomplished in the historical development of Israel, or showing how the Almighty God and Lord of the whole earth continued as King of Israel uninterruptedly to fulfil the covenant of grace which He had concluded with the fathers and had set up at Sinai, and built up His kingdom, by leading the people whom He had chosen as His own possession, notwithstanding all the opposition of their sinful nature, further and further onwards towards the goal of their divine calling, and thus preparing the way for the salvation of the whole world. These books, therefore, do not contain a general history of the natural development of the Israelitish nation from a political point of view, but trace the history of the people of God, or Israel, in its theocratic development as a covenant nation, and as the channel of that salvation which was to be manifested to all nations in the fulness of time. Their authors, therefore, by virtue of prophetic illumination, have simply selected and described such events and circumstances from among the rich and plentiful variety contained in the accounts handed down by tradition, whether relating to families, tribes, or the nation as a whole, as were of importance to the history of the kingdom of God; that is to say, in addition to the divine revelations in word and deed, the wonders wrought by God, and the prophetic declarations of His counsel and will, they have recorded chiefly such points in the life and conduct of the nation and its more prominent members as affected advantageously or otherwise the development of the divine kingdom in Israel. Whatever had no inward connection with this higher aim and peculiar calling of Israel, was, as a rule, passed over altogether, or, at all

events, was only touched upon and mentioned so far as it served to exhibit the attitude of the nation generally, or of its rulers and leaders, towards the Lord and His kingdom. This will help to explain not only the apparent inequality in the treatment of the history, or the fact that here and there we have long periods merely referred to in a few general remarks, whereas, on the other hand, the adventures and acts of particular individuals are depicted with biographical minuteness, but also another distinctive peculiarity, viz. that the natural causes of the events which occurred, and the subjective motives which determined the conduct of historical personages, are for the most part left unnoticed, or only briefly and cursorily alluded to, whilst the divine interpositions and influence are constantly brought into prominence, and, so far as they were manifested in an extraordinary manner, are carefully and circumstantially described.

In all these respects the prophetic histories are so intimately connected with the historical narrative in the books of Moses, that they may be regarded as a simple continuation of those books. This not only applies to the book of Joshua, but to the other prophetic histories also. Just as the book of Joshua is linked on to the death of Moses, so the book of Judges is linked on to the death of Joshua; whilst the books of Kings commence with the termination of the reign of David, the point to which the history of David is brought in the books of Samuel. These books, again, are connected just as closely with the book of Judges; for, after giving an account of the high-priesthood of Eli, and the birth and youth of Samuel, which forms the introduction to the labours of Samuel, they describe the continuance and close of the subjugation of Israel by the Philistines, the commencement and prolongation of which are related in the last section of the book of Judges, although in this case the link of connection is somewhat hidden by the appendices to the book of Judges (chap. xvii.–xxi.), and by the introduction to the history of Samuel (1 Sam. i.–iii.). This close connection between all the writings in question, which is still further strengthened by their evident agreement in the selection and treatment of the historical materials, does not arise, as some suppose, from the fact that they received a last finish from the editorial hand of some one man, by whom this harmony and the so-called theocratic pragmatism which is common to them all was stamped upon the history; but it arose from the very nature of the historical facts themselves, *i.e.* from the fact that the history of Israel was not the result of a

purely natural development, but was the fruit and result of the divine training of the covenant nation. The prophetic character, by which these works are distinguished from the other sacred histories of the Israelites, consists in the fact that they do not trace the theocratic history from an individual point of view, but according to its actual course, and in harmony with the successive steps in the development of the divine counsels of salvation; and thus furnish their own proof that they were written by prophets, to whom the Spirit of the Lord had given a spiritual insight into the divine law of the kingdom.

With regard to the *origin* of the prophetical books of history, and the *date of their composition*, all that can be determined with certainty is, that they were all composed some time after the last event which they record, but were founded upon written contemporaneous accounts of the different events referred to. Although no sources are mentioned in the books of Joshua, of the Judges, and of Samuel, with the exception of the "book of Jasher" (Josh. x. 13, and 2 Sam. i. 18), from which the poetical extracts contained in the passages have been taken, there can be no doubt that the historical materials even of these books have been obtained, so far as everything essential is concerned, either from public documents or private writings. In the books of Kings we meet for the first time with the original sources regularly cited at the close of each king's reign; and, judging from the titles, "book of the Acts of Solomon" (1 Kings xi. 41), and "book of the Chronicles (or 'daily occurrences,' *i.e.* contemporaneous history) of the Kings of Israel and Judah" (1 Kings xiv. 19, 29, etc.), they were in all probability fuller annals to which reference is made, as containing further accounts of the acts and undertakings of the several kings. We find a similar work cited in the books of the Chronicles under different titles, whilst certain prophetic works are referred to for the history of particular kings, such as words of Samuel the seer, Nathan the prophet, and Gad the seer (1 Chron. xxix. 29); of Shemaiah the prophet, and Iddo the seer (2 Chron. xii. 15), and others; also the prophecies (vision) of Isaiah (2 Chron. xxxii. 32), and words of Jehu the prophet (2 Chron. xx. 34), both of which are expressly said to have been received into the book of the kings of Israel (or of Judah and Israel). It is obvious from these statements, not only that prophetic writings and collections of oracles were incorporated in the more comprehensive annals of the kingdom, but also that the prophets themselves were engaged in various

ways in committing the history of Israel to writing. The foundation for this occupation had no doubt been laid in the companies or schools of the prophets, which had been called into existence by Samuel, and in which not only sacred music and sacred song were cultivated, but sacred literature also, more especially the history of the theocracy. Consequently, as *Oehler* supposes, in all probability the foundation was laid even in the *cœnobium* at Ramah (1 Sam. xix. 19 sqq.) for that great historical work, which was composed by prophets during the following centuries and is frequently referred to in the books of Kings, and which certainly lay before the writer of the Chronicles, though possibly in a revised form. The task of writing down the history of the theocracy was very closely connected with a prophet's vocation. Called as they were to be watchers (*zophim* or *mezappim: vid.* Micah vii. 4; Jer. vi. 17; Ezek. iii. 17, xxxiii. 7) of the theocracy of the Lord, it was their special duty to test and judge the ways of the nation and its rulers according to the standard of the law of God, and not only to work in every possible way for the recognition of the majesty and sole glory of Jehovah, to bear witness before both high and low against every instance of apostasy from Him, against every violation of His ordinances and rights, and to proclaim judgment upon all who hardened themselves against the word of God and salvation and deliverance to the penitent and desponding; but also to set forth the guidance of Israel in the light of the saving purpose of God, and the inviolable rule of divine retribution,—to pass sentence upon the past circumstances of the nation, particularly the life and conduct of its kings, according to the standard of the law,—and to exhibit in their fate the reality of the divine promises and threats; and through all this to hold up, in the past history of the fathers, a mirror for the warning and comfort of future generations. With all these facts before us, we are fully warranted in assuming, that the prophetic works of history were employed as sources even in the composition of the books of Samuel. But this is not a probable supposition so far as the times of the judges are concerned, as we can find no certain traces of any organized prophetic labours by which the national life could be at all deeply influenced, notwithstanding the fact, that beside the prophetess Deborah (Judg. iv. 4), there is a prophet mentioned in Judg. vi. 7 sqq., and 1 Sam. ii. 27. But even if the author of our book of Judges could not avail himself of any prophetic writings, we must not on that account deny that he may have made use of other written statements and accounts,

handed down by contemporaries of the events. In the book of Joshua it is almost universally admitted, that at all events the geographical portions have been taken from public documents.—For further remarks upon this subject, see the introductions to the different books.

The employment of written sources, from living auditors or eye-witnesses of the events, in all the prophetic books of history, is evident as a general fact from the contents of the books, from the abundance of genuine historical details which they contain although many of them extend over very long periods of time; from the exactness of the geographical *data* connected with the different accounts, and the many genealogical as well as chronological particulars; and, in fact, from the clearness and certainty of the descriptions given of circumstances and occurrences which are often very complicated in their character. But this is still more obvious from the style in which the different books are written, where the gradual development of the language, and the changes which occurred in the course of centuries, are unmistakeably apparent. For whilst the books of Kings, which date from the time of the captivity, contain many words, forms, and phrases that indicate that corruption of the Hebrew through Aramæan idioms, which commenced with the invasions of Israel and Judah by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, there are no certain traces of the decline of the language to be found in the books of Samuel and Judges, but the style throughout is the pure style of the age of David and Solomon; whilst in the book of Joshua, as a whole, we still find the old forms of the Mosaic times, although the actual archaisms of the Pentateuch have already disappeared. This difference in the words employed in the different books cannot be satisfactorily explained from the simple fact, that the sources used, and from which extracts were made, were written in different ages. To quote but one example, since the fuller discussion of this point belongs to the introduction to the separate books, this is perfectly obvious from the use of the word נִצָּב, in connection with Solomon's governors, in 1 Kings x. 15; since the author of our books of Kings cannot possibly have taken this word from his original sources for the history of Solomon's reign, as it was not till the time of the Chaldean and Persian dominion that this foreign word was adopted into the Hebrew language.

The peculiarities in the language of the different prophetic books of history do furnish decisive evidence, however, against the hypothesis propounded by *Spinoza*, and lately revived by *Stähelin* and

*Bertheau*, viz. that "in the historical books, from Gen. i. to 2 Kings xxv., in the form and connection in which we possess them now, we have not several historical works which have been composed independently of one another, but rather a connected treatment of the history from the beginning of the world to the time of the captivity" (*Bertheau*), or "*one* work, which owes its present form to *one* man, or at any rate to *one* age" (*Stähelin*). The arguments adduced in support of this are all very weak. "The close connection in which these writings stand to one another, so that each book in succession is closely connected with the one before it, and presupposes all that the latter contains, and none goes back to an earlier period than that at which the previous book closes" (*Stähelin*), does prove indeed that they have not been written independently of one another; but it by no means proves that they belong to one author, or even to *one* age. Nor can we infer that they have been composed or finally revised by one man, from the fact, "that very often, in some one writing, as it has come down to us, we not only find two different styles, or a totally different mode of description, so that we can with certainty conclude that the work is founded upon two different sources, but these sources run through writings that are separated from one another, and are frequently ascribed to entirely different ages." For the circumstance, that a writing is founded upon two sources, is no proof at all that it is nothing more than a portion of a larger work; and the proof which *Stähelin* adduces of his assertion, that the same source runs through several of the works in question, is much too weak and untenable to be regarded as an established fact, not to mention that, according to the first rules of logic, what applies to *several* cannot therefore be predicated of *all*. The actual root of this hypothesis is to be found in the naturalistic assumption of modern critics, that the theocratic spirit, which is common to all the prophetic histories, was not to be found in the historical facts, but was simply the "theocratic pragmatism" of the historians themselves, which had at the most a certain subjective truth, but no objective reality. From such an assumption, however, it is impossible to come to a correct conclusion with regard to either the contents or the origin of the prophetic histories of the Old Testament.

# THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.

## INTRODUCTION.

### CONTENTS, DATE, AND CHARACTER OF THE BOOK.

THE book of Joshua derives its name, יְהוֹשֻׁעַ, Ἰησοῦς Ναυή or υἱὸς Ναυή (LXX.), not from its author, but from its contents, viz. the history of the guidance of Israel into the land of Canaan, the land promised to the fathers, by Joshua the son of Nun. It commences immediately after the death of Moses, with the command addressed by the Lord to Joshua, to lead the children of Israel over the Jordan into Canaan, and not only to take possession of this land, but to divide it among the tribes of Israel (chap. i. 1–9), and closes with the death and burial of Joshua and his contemporary, the high priest Eleazar (chap. xxiv. 29–33). The contents may be divided into two parts of nearly equal length,—the conquest of Canaan (chap. i.–xii.), and the division of it among the tribes of Israel (chap. xii.–xxiv.); chap. i. 1–9 forming the introduction, and chap. xxiv. 29–33 the conclusion. After the introductory notice, that when Moses was dead the Lord commanded Joshua, who had been called to be the leader of Israel in his stead, to carry out the work entrusted to him, and encouraged him by the promise of His omnipotent help in the completion of it (chap. i. 1–9), the history opens in the *first part*, (1) with the preparations made by Joshua for advancing into Canaan; viz. (*a*) the command of Joshua to the people to prepare for crossing the Jordan, the summons to the two tribes and a half to help their brethren to conquer Canaan (chap. i. 10–18), and the despatch of spies to Jericho (chap. ii.); (*b*) the crossing of the river, which had been laid dry by a divine miracle (chap. iii. and iv.); and (*c*) the preparation of Israel for the conquest of the land, by the performance of circumcision and the

passover at Gilgal (chap. v. 1–12). Then follow (2) the conquest and subjugation of Canaan; viz. (*a*) the commencement of it by the miraculous fall of Jericho (chap. v. 13–vi. 27), the attack upon Ai, and capture of that town, after the expiation of the guilt that had been brought upon the congregation through the sin of Achan against the ban (chap. vii.–viii. 29), and the solemn act of setting up the law in the land on Ebal and Gerizim (chap. viii. 30–35); (*b*) the further conquest of the land through the subjugation of the Gibeonites, who had succeeded surreptitiously in obtaining a treaty from Israel which guaranteed their safety (chap. ix.); the two great victories over the allied kings of Canaan in the south (chap. x.) and north (chap. xi.), with the capture of the fortified towns of the land; and lastly, at the close of the first part, the list of the conquered kings (ch. xii.).—The *second part* commences with the command of God to Joshua to divide the whole land among the nine tribes and a half for a possession, although several parts of it still remained unconquered; as two tribes and a half had already received from Moses their inheritance on the eastern side of the Jordan, the boundaries and towns of which are then described (chap. xiii.). Accordingly Joshua, with the heads of the people appointed for the purpose, proceeded to the distribution of the land, first of all (*a*) in the camp at Gilgal, where Caleb was the first to receive his inheritance (chap. xiv.), and then, according to the lot, the tribes of Judah (chap. xv.) and Joseph, *i.e.* Ephraim and (half) Manasseh (chap. xvi. and xvii.); and afterwards (*b*) at Shiloh, where the tabernacle was first of all erected, and a description of the land to be divided written down (chap. xviii. 1–10), and then the rest of the tribes—Benjamin (chap. xviii. 11–28), Simeon, Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Dan (chap. xix.) —received their inheritance, after which the cities of refuge were selected (chap. xx.), and forty-eight cities were given up by the twelve tribes for the Levites to occupy (chap. xxi.); and finally, (*c*) the warriors belonging to the tribes beyond Jordan were sent back by Joshua to their own inheritance (chap. xxii.). To this there is appended, in the next place, an account of what Joshua did towards the end of his life to establish the tribes of Israel securely in their inheritance: viz. (*a*) an exhortation to the heads of the tribes, who were gathered round him, to carry out their calling with fidelity (chap. xxiii.); and (*b*) the renewal of the covenant at the diet at Shechem (chap. xxiv. 1–28). This is followed by an account of the close of Joshua's life, and the conclu-

sion of the whole book (chap. xxiv. 29–33). Thus the two parts or halves of the book correspond exactly to one another, both in form and in contents. As the events described in ch. i. 10–v. 12 were preparatory to the conquest of Canaan, so the diets held by Joshua after the distribution of the land by lot (chap. xxiii.–xxiv. 28) had no other object than to establish the covenant people firmly in the inheritance bestowed upon them by God, by exhorting them to be faithful to the Lord. And just as chap. xii. rounds off the first part, as a kind of appendix which completes the history of the conquest of the land, so chap. xxii. is obviously an appendix to the distribution of the land among the tribes, which brings to a close the dismission of the people to the separate portions of their inheritance.

The book of Joshua is not intended merely as a continuation of the history of Israel from the death of Moses to the death of Joshua, still less as a description of the acts of Joshua only. The purpose of the book is rather to show how, after the death of Moses, the faithful covenant God fulfilled to the children of Israel, whom He had adopted as His people of possession through the mediation of His servant, the promise which He had made to the patriarchs; how the Canaanites were destroyed, and their land given to the tribes of Israel for an hereditary possession through the medium of Joshua, the servant of Moses, whom he had consecrated as leader of the people through the laying on of hands and by putting some of his honour upon him. As the servant of Moses treading in his footsteps, Joshua finished the work which Moses was not allowed to bring to a conclusion on account of his sin at the water of strife, viz. the planting and establishment of Israel in Canaan, the land of its inheritance, which the Lord had selected for His dwelling (Ex. xv. 17) and chosen as the nursery ground of His kingdom. As Joshua simply carried on in this respect, and brought to completion, the work which Moses had begun, arranged, and set on foot, the book of Joshua is naturally connected very closely with the books of Moses, though without forming an integral part, or the last portion of it, and without being written by Joshua himself.

The *origin* of the book of Joshua is involved in obscurity, as we can neither find out its author, nor determine with certainty the date of its composition. Whereas, on the one hand, the historical account bears throughout the mark of having been written by an eye-witness, and even by one who had taken part in the events described, and the description given of the possessions allotted to

the different tribes according to their respective boundaries and the cities which they contained is unquestionably founded upon contemporaneous writings, and in one passage the writer actually classes himself with those who crossed over Jordan into Canaan under the guidance of Joshua (chap. v. 1, "until we were passed over"); on the other hand we find a number of historical statements in the book, which point beyond the life of Joshua and are opposed to the idea that it was written by Joshua himself. We do not include in these either the closing accounts of the death of Joshua and Eleazar (chap. xxiv. 29, 33), or the allusion to the "book of the righteous" (chap. x. 13): for these accounts might have been appended to a writing of Joshua's by a later hand, just as in the case of the Pentateuch; and the book of the righteous is not a work that was composed after the time of Joshua, but a collection of odes in praise of the acts of the Lord in Israel, which were composed by pious minstrels during the conquest of the land, and were added one by one to this collection. Even the frequent repetition of the statement that this or the other has continued "to this day," furnishes no certain proof that the book was not written in the closing years of Joshua's life, when we consider the purely relative signification of the formula, which is sometimes used in connection with things that only lasted a few years. Apart from such passages as chap. xxii. 3, 17, and xxiii. 8, 9, in which no one has discovered any allusion to a later time than that of Joshua, we find the formula "to this day" in chap. iv. 9, v. 9, vi. 25, vii. 26, viii. 28, 29, ix. 27, xiii. 13, xiv. 14, xv. 63, and xvi. 10. But if the remark made in chap. vi. 25 with regard to Rahab, "she dwelleth in Israel unto this day," was certainly written during her lifetime, such statements as that the first encampment of Israel in Canaan "is called Gilgal unto this day," on account of the circumcision of the people that took place there, and that the valley in which Achan was stoned is called Achor "unto this day" (chap. v. 9, vii. 26), or that the memorial stones set up in the bed of the Jordan (chap. iv. 9), and the heaps of stones raised upon the bodies of Achan and the king of Ai (chap. vii. 26, viii. 29), remain "unto this day;" that "unto this day" Ai remains an heap (chap. viii. 28), the Gibeonites are hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation (chap. ix. 27), and Hebron is the inheritance of Caleb (chap. xiv. 14); that the Geshurites and Maachathites have not been expelled (chap. xiii. 13), nor the inhabitants of Jerusalem and Gezer (chap. xv. 63, xvi. 10), but dwell among and by the side of Israel "unto this day,"

may be just as easily understood, if they were made ten or fifteen years after the conquest and division of Canaan, as if they were made after an interval of eighty or a hundred years. For even in giving names, the remark that the new name has remained to this day is of greater significance at the end of ten years than after an interval of a century, since its permanence would be fully secured if it made its way to general adoption during the first ten years. The formula "to this day" proves nothing more than that the written record was not quite contemporaneous with the events; but it does not warrant us in concluding that the book itself was written several generations, or even centuries, after the settlement of Israel in Canaan.

It is different with the accounts of the conquest of Hebron by Caleb, Debir by Othniel, and Leshem by the Danites (chap. xv. 13–19 and xix. 47). Considered by themselves, these conquests could no doubt have taken place before the death of Joshua, as he lived for some time after the distribution of the land and the settlement of the different tribes in the possessions allotted to them (compare chap. xix. 50 and xxiii. 1, with chap. xxii. 4 and xxi. 43, 44). But if we compare these accounts with the parallel accounts of the same conquests in Judg. i. 10–16 and xviii., there can be no doubt that it was after Joshua's death that the places mentioned were taken permanently from the Canaanites, and came into the actual and permanent possession of the Israelites. For, according to Judg. i. 1–15, the Israelites inquired of the Lord, after the death of Joshua, who should begin the war with the Canaanites, *i.e.* with those who had not yet been destroyed, and received this reply, "Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand;" whereupon Judah and Simeon smote the Canaanites at Bezek, then advanced against Jerusalem, took this city and set it on fire, and "afterward" (ver. 9) proceeded against the Canaanites on the mountains and in the south, and took Hebron and Debir. From this account it is evident at once that even the capture of Jerusalem did not take place till after the death of Joshua, and that even then the Jebusites were not driven out of Jerusalem, but continued to dwell there by the side of the Benjamites (Judg. i. 21), so that the same statement in Joshua xv. 63 also points beyond the death of Joshua. It is equally evident from Judg. xviii. that the Danites of Zorah and Eshtaol did not enter upon the expedition against Leshem or Laish till after Joshua's death. This also applies to the other statements concerning the failure to expel

the Canaanites out of different districts and towns, which are common to this book and the book of Judges (compare chap. xiii. 2–5, xvi. 10, and xvii. 11, 12, with Judg. iii. 3, i. 29, and i. 27, 28), so that we might infer from every one of these passages that this book of Joshua was not written till after Joshua's death, and therefore that the closing accounts of his death in chap. xxiv. 29–33 formed a part of the original work.

If we endeavour to determine the date of composition more exactly, we have first of all to bear in mind the fact, that the wars and conquests just referred to cannot have occurred a very long time after Joshua's death; for, in the first place, it was in the very nature of things, that when the different tribes of Israel proceeded into their different possessions, even if they did not commence the attack upon the remaining Canaanites immediately, they would certainly do so very soon, in order that they might obtain complete and undisputed possession of the land. Moreover, when the division of the land by lot took place, Caleb was eighty-five years old; and yet he lived to see the capture of Hebron and Debir, and even took part in it, inasmuch as he not only promised but was able to give his daughter to the conqueror of Debir for a wife (chap. xv. 13–19; Judg. i. 11 sqq.). It was no doubt shortly after these wars, in which Judah took possession of the mountains, but was unable to destroy the Canaanites who dwelt in the valley, because of their possessing iron chariots (Judg. i. 19), that the Danites felt obliged to go northwards to conquer Leshem, and take it for a possession, on account of the inheritance assigned them by lot between Judah and Ephraim being too small for them, because the Canaanites had not been expelled. And whilst all these occurrences, which are mentioned in the book of Joshua, fell within the period immediately succeeding the death of Joshua, we can find distinct evidence in the book itself that it was not written after, but before, the establishment of the monarchy in Israel. According to chap. xvi. 10, the Canaanites were still dwelling in Gezer; yet they were destroyed at the close of David's reign, or the commencement of that of Solomon, when Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, conquered the town (1 Kings ix. 16). According to chap. xv. 63, the Jebusites had not yet been driven out of Jerusalem; but this was accomplished by David at the beginning of his reign over all the tribes of Israel (2 Sam. v. 3, 6–9). According to chap. ix. 27, the place for the temple had not yet been chosen, but this was done in the time of David (2 Sam. xxiv. 18 sqq.; 1 Chron. xxi. 16 sqq). And the

Gibeonites were still hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation for the altar of the Lord, by virtue of the treaty which Joshua and the elders had made with them; whereas this treaty was violated by Saul, who endeavoured to destroy the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1 sqq.). If we add to this, that our book shows no traces whatever of later times and circumstances either in its style or contents, but that it is closely connected with the Pentateuch in the language as well as in its peculiar stand-point,—for example, when the only Phœnicians mentioned are the Sidonians, and they are reckoned as belonging to the Canaanites who were to be destroyed (chap. xiii. 4–6), whereas in the time of David we find the circumstances entirely changed (2 Sam. v. 11; 1 Kings v. 15; 1 Chron. xiv. 1); and again when Sidon is referred to as the chief city of Phœnicia, and the epithet "great" is applied to it (chap. xi. 8, xix. 28), whereas Tyre had outstripped Sidon even in the days of David,—the conclusion becomes an extremely probable one, that the book was written not later than twenty or twenty-five years after the death of Joshua, in all probability by one of the elders who crossed the Jordan with Joshua, and had taken part in the conquest of Canaan (*vid.* chap. v. 1, 6), but who survived Joshua a considerable time (chap. xxiv. 31; Judg. ii. 7).

But even if the book of Joshua was not composed till some time after the events recorded (and the authorship cannot be determined with certainty), this does not affect its *historico-prophetic character;* for both the contents and form of the book show it to be an independent and simple work composed with historical fidelity, and a work which is as thoroughly pervaded with the spirit of the Old Testament revelation as the Pentateuch itself. However closely it is connected with the Pentateuch both in language and contents, there is no tenable ground for the hypothesis set up in various forms by modern critics, that it has arisen, just like the Pentateuch, from the fusion of two or three earlier writings, and was composed by the so-called "Deuteronomist." For, even if we leave altogether out of sight the fact that this hypothesis is unfounded and untenable in the case of the Pentateuch, the supposed community of authorship between the book of Joshua and that of Deuteronomy, as well as the rest of the Pentateuch, in the revised form in which it has come down to us, is founded chiefly upon the opinion that the death of Moses, with which the Pentateuch closes, "does not form a fitting conclusion for a work which commenced with the creation, and treated the earlier history in the manner in which this is done

in the Pentateuch;" because "it is hardly conceivable that a historical work, which was written at any rate some time after the conquest of the land of Canaan by the Israelites, should describe all the preparations that were made for the conquest of the land, and then break off without including either the capture of the land, or the division of it among the remaining tribes" (*Bleek's Einleitung*, *Stähelin*, and others). But, in the first place, it is to be observed that the Pentateuch was not written "some time after the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites," and is not to be regarded as a historical work in the sense intended by these critics. It is the law book of the Old Testament, to which, as even *Bleek* admits, the book of Deuteronomy forms an appropriate close. And, in the second place, although the book of Joshua is closely connected with the Pentateuch, and carries on the history to the conquest of the promised land by the Israelites, there is evidence that it is an independent work, in the fact that it repeats the account of the conquest of the land on the east of Jordan, and its distribution by Moses among the two tribes and a half, and also of the cities of refuge which Moses had already appointed in that part of the land, for the purpose of giving a full and complete account of the fulfilment of the promise made by God to the patriarchs, that their seed should receive the land of Canaan for a possession; and still more in the peculiarities of language by which it is obviously distinguished from the books of Moses. In the book of Joshua not only do we find none of the archaisms which run pretty uniformly through all the books of the Pentateuch, such as הוּא for הִיא, נַעַר for נַעֲרָה, הַאֵל for הָאֵלָה, and other words which are peculiar to the Pentateuch; but we find, on the other hand, words and expressions which never occur in the Pentateuch, *e.g.* the constant form יְרִיחוֹ (chap. ii. 1–3, etc., in all twenty-six times) instead of the form יְרֵחוֹ, which is quite as uniformly adopted in the Pentateuch (Num. xxii. 1, xxvi. 3, etc., in all eleven times): also מַמְלְכוּת, for the kingdom of Sihon and Og (chap. xiii. 12, 21, 27, 30, 31), instead of מַמְלָכָה (Num. xxxii. 33; Deut. iii. 4, 10, etc.); קָנוֹא (chap. xxiv. 19) instead of קַנָּא (Ex. xx. 5, xxxiv. 14; Deut. iv. 24, v. 9, etc.); שִׁמְעַ, *fama* (chap. vi. 27, ix. 9), for שֵׁמַע (Gen. xxix. 13, etc.); יְרֹא (chap. xxii. 25) for יִרְאָה (Deut. iv. 10, v. 26, etc.); and lastly, גִּבּוֹרֵי הַחַיִל (chap. i. 14, vi. 2, viii. 3, x. 7) for בְּנֵי חַיִל (Deut. iii. 18); נֹאד, a bottle (chap. ix. 4, 13), for חֵמָה (Gen. xxi. 14, 15, 19); הַצִּית, to set on fire or burn (chap. viii. 8, 19); צָנַח, to spring down (chap. xv. 18); קָצִין, a prince or leader (chap. x. 24); שָׁקַט, to rest (chap. xi. 23,

xiv. 15); and other words besides, which you seek for in vain in the Pentateuch, whereas they frequently occur in the later books.[1]

Whilst the independence of the book of Joshua is thus placed beyond all doubt, its internal unity, or the singleness of the authorship, is evident in general from the arrangement and connection of the contents, as shown above, and in particular from the fact, that in the different parts of the book we neither meet with material differences or discrepancies, nor are able to detect two different styles. The attempt which was formerly made by *De Wette*, *Hauff*, and others, to show that there were material discrepancies in the different parts, has been almost entirely given up by *Bleek* and *Stähelin* in their introductions. What *Bleek* still notices in this respect, in chaps. iii. and iv., viii. 1–29 and other passages, will be examined in our exposition of the chapters in question, along with the arguments which *Knobel* employs against the unity of the book. The many traces of different modes of thought which were adduced by *Stähelin* in 1843, have been dropped in his special introduction (1862): the only one that he insists upon now is the fact, that the way in which Joshua acts in chap. xviii. 1–10 is very different from chap. xiv. sqq.; and that in the historical sections, as a rule, Joshua is described as acting very differently from what would be expected from Num. xxvii. 21, inasmuch as he acts quite independently, and never asks the high priest to give him an answer through the Urim and Thummim. This remark is so far correct, that throughout the whole book, and not merely in the historical sections, Joshua is never said to have inquired the will of the Lord through the medium of the Urim and Thummim of the high priest, and Eleazar is not mentioned at all in the historical portions. But it does not follow from this that there is any such difference in the mode of thought as would point to a difference of authorship. For,

[1] How completely the hypothesis that the book of Joshua was written by the Deuteronomist is wrecked on these differences in language, is evident even from the attempts which have been made to set them aside. For example, when *Stähelin* observes that the later editor retained the form יִרְחוֹ in the Pentateuch as he found it in the original work, whereas in the book of Joshua he altered the original work into the form he commonly used, this assumption is just as incredible as the hitherto unheard of assertion that the archaistic use of הוּא as a feminine instead of הִיא is traceable to a later form. What can have induced the later editor, then, to alter the form מַמְלֶכֶת, which he so commonly uses in Deuteronomy, into מַמְלָכוּת in Joshua? The "reliable" *Bleek* prefers, therefore, to take no notice of these differences, or at least to express no opinion about them.

on the one hand, Joshua is blamed in chap. ix. 14 for having made a treaty with the Gibeonites, without asking at the mouth of Jehovah, and in this there is evidently a gentle allusion to Num. xxvii. 21; and on the other hand, even Num. xxvii. 21 by no means implies that God would only make known His will to Joshua through the Urim and Thummim: so that when Joshua is there referred to the high priest for instructions, all other communications, such as those which he received directly from the Lord with regard to the conquest and division of Canaan, are thereby precluded. If the Lord made known to him what he was to do in this respect, partly by the direct communication of His will, and partly by His angel (chap. v. 13 sqq.), there was no occasion at all for Eleazar to be mentioned in the historical portion of the book, since the direction of the army to fight battles and conquer towns did not form part of the official functions of the high priest, even if he did accompany Joshua in his campaigns. In the geographical portion, however, Eleazar is only mentioned in connection with the committee of heads of the nation appointed according to the law in Num. xxxiv. 17 sqq. for the distribution of the land (chap. xiv. 1, xix. 51, xxi. 1); and even here he does not stand out with any peculiar prominence, as Joshua was still at the head of the whole nation when this was performed (chap. xiii. 1, 7). Consequently, not only did Caleb apply to Joshua with the request for the inheritance promised him by the Lord (chap. xiv. 6 sqq.); but even in other cases, where there was no reason for enumerating the different members of the commission for dividing the land, Joshua is mentioned as appointing and superintending the casting of the lots (chap. xviii. 3-10, xx. 1). The proofs adduced of the "double style" of the book are equally weak. The principal ones are the fact, that the word generally used for tribe in the historical sections is *shebet*, whereas *matteh* is the word employed in the geographical sections, and that in the latter the word *machaloketh* is altogether wanting (chap. xi. 23, xii. 7). But the interchange of *shebet* and *matteh* may be fully explained from the difference in the meaning of these two words, *shebet* denoting the tribe as a political corporation, possessing independence and power, and *matteh* having simple regard to its genealogical aspect,—a distinction which is not overthrown by the assurance, that "in chap. vii. 14, 16, 18, and xxii. 1, as compared with chap. xiii. 29, and in chap. iii. 12, as compared with Num. xxxiv. 18, the charge is perfectly arbitrary." But whether it be involuntary or carefully considered, there is no ground for inferring that there have been

two writers engaged upon the work, for the simple reason that both words occur in the historical as well as the geographical sections,—sometimes, in fact, in the very same verse, *e.g.* chap. xiii. 29 and Num. xviii. 2, where we cannot possibly imagine a fusion of different documents to have taken place. (For further remarks, see at chap. vii. 1.) The word *machaloketh*, however, is not synonymous with *mishpachah*, as *Stähelin* supposes, but denotes the various subdivisions of the tribes into families, fathers' houses and families; and this also not only occurs in chap. xi. 23 and xii. 7, but in the geographical portion also, in chap. xviii. 10. The other remark, viz. that "in the place of the רָאשֵׁי אָבוֹת, who are the leading actors in the *geographical* sections, we find the elders, judges, heads רָאשִׁים and שֹׁטְרִים in the *historical*, or else simply the *shoterim* (chap. i. 10, iii. 2, viii. 33, xxiii. 2, xxiv. 1), or the elders," is neither quite correct, nor in the least degree conclusive. It is incorrect, inasmuch as even in the geographical portion, namely chap. xvii. 4, the נְשִׂיאִים are mentioned instead of the רָאשֵׁי אָבוֹת, along with Eleazar and Joshua. But the notion upon which this argument is founded is still more erroneous, viz. that "the נְשִׂיאִים, רָאשֵׁי אָבוֹת, זְקֵנִים, שֹׁפְטִים and שֹׁטְרִים are all the same, as we may clearly see from Deut. i. 15;" for the identity of the terms elders and heads with the terms judges and officers (*shoterim*) cannot possibly be inferred from this passage, in which the judges and *shoterim* are said to have been chosen from the elders of the nation. Even the "heads of the fathers' houses" (see at Ex. vi. 14) were only a section of the princes and heads of the nation, and those mentioned in the book of Joshua are simply those who were elected as members of the distribution committee, and who are naturally referred to in connection with the division of the land by lot; whereas the judges and *shoterim* had nothing to do with it, and for this very reason are not mentioned at all in the geographical sections.—And if, instead of confining ourselves to the words, we turn our attention to the facts, all the peculiarities that we meet with in the different parts of the book may be explained in this way, and the seeming differences brought into harmony. In a work which embraces two such different subjects as the forcible conquest and the peaceable distribution of the land of Canaan, the same ideas and expression cannot possibly be constantly recurring, if the words are to be at all in conformity with the actual contents. And not the smallest conclusion can be drawn from such differences as these with regard to the composition of the book; much less can they be adduced as proofs of diversity of authorship. Moreover, the

unity of authorship is not to be overthrown by proving, or showing it to be probable, that the author made use of written documents for some of the sections—such, for example, as the official records prepared for the distribution of the land by lot—in his description of the possessions of the different tribes.

Lastly, the historical fidelity of the book of Joshua cannot justly be called in question; and so far as all the narratives and descriptions are concerned, which lie within the sphere of the ordinary laws of nature, this is generally admitted. This applies not only to the description of the possessions of the different tribes according to their boundaries and towns, which are almost universally acknowledged to have been derived from authentic records, but to such historical passages as the words of Caleb (chap. xiv. 6 sqq.), the address of Phinehas, and the reply of the two tribes and a half (chap. xxii.), the complaint of the children of Joseph on account of the smallness of the possessions that had fallen to their lot, and Joshua's answer (chap. xvii. 14 sqq.), which are so thoroughly original, and so perfectly appropriate to the persons and circumstances, that their historical credibility cannot be disputed.[1] It is chiefly at the miraculous occurrences that the opponents of the biblical revelation have taken offence: partly therefore because of the miracles themselves, and partly because the statement that God commanded the destruction of the Canaanites is irreconcilable with correct (?) views of the Godhead, they deny the historical character of the whole book. But the miracles recorded in this book do not stand alone; on the contrary, they are most intimately connected with the great work of divine revelation, and the redemption of the human race; so that it is only through unscriptural assumptions as to the character of God, and His operations in nature and the world of men, that they can be pronounced unreal, or altogether denied. And the objection, that the destruction of the Canaanites, as an act commanded by God, "cannot be reconciled even with only half correct notions of the Deity," as *Eichhorn* maintains, rests upon totally unscriptural and irrational views of God and the divine government, which

[1] Even *Eichhorn*, for example, says in his Introduction, "The words of Caleb, in chap. xiv. 1 sqq., in which he asks for the inheritance that had been promised him, bear too strongly the characteristics of an appeal from the mouth of an old man of eighty years of age, and breathe too thoroughly in every word his spirit, and age, and peculiar situation, for it to be possible that it should be merely the composition of a later writer, who placed himself in imagination in his situation, and put the words into his mouth."

deny *a priori* all living influence on the part of the "Deity" upon the earth and its inhabitants. But the true God is not a Deity who can neither help nor injure men (Jer. x. 5); He is the almighty creator, preserver, and governor of the world. This God was Jehovah, who chose Israel for His own people, "a living God, an everlasting King" (Jer. x. 10); who not only fixed for the nations the bounds of their habitations, but their appointed times as well, that they should seek Him, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him (Deut. xxxii. 8; Acts xvii. 26, 27); who, because He has given to every nation upon earth life and being, property and land, to be rightly used, and to promote their own happiness through the glorification of the name of God, possesses both the power and the right to deprive them of all their possessions, and wipe out every trace of them from the earth, if they dishonour and disgrace the name of God by an obstinate abuse of the blessings and gifts entrusted to them. • Thus the only true God, who judges the earth in eternally unchangeable wisdom and righteousness, and manifests His wrath in great judgments, as well as His mercy in innumerable blessings to all the children of men, had promised to Abraham that He would give him the land of Canaan for a possession for his seed the children of Israel, when the iniquity of the Amorites, who possessed it at that time, was full, *i.e.* had reached its full measure (Gen. xii. 7, xv. 13–16). The expulsion of the Canaanites, therefore, from possessions which they had no doubt rightfully held, but to which they had forfeited their right through the misuse they had made of them, is to be regarded quite as decidedly as an act of penal justice on the part of God, as the presentation of this land to Israel was an act of His free grace; and the destruction of the Canaanites by the Israelites, as well as their capture of the possession which the Canaanites had forfeited through their sins (*vid.* Lev. xviii. 24–28; Deut. xii. 29–31), was perfectly justifiable, if, as our book affirms, the Israelites were only acting as instruments in the hands of the Lord. It is true they were not warranted in carrying on a war of extermination against the Canaanites simply because the land had been given them by God, any more than David was warranted in putting Saul to death and wresting the kingdom from him, although he had been rejected by the Lord, simply because Samuel had promised him the kingdom by the command of God, and had even anointed him king over Israel. But the Israelites did not proceed from Egypt to Canaan of their own accord, or by their own power; they were brought out of this land of their

bondage by the God of their fathers with a mighty arm, and led by Him through the wilderness into the promised land. Joshua acted, as Moses had done before him, by the immediate command of God; and the fact that this command was real and well-founded, and not a mere fancy, is proved by the miraculous signs through which God accredited the armies of Israel as the servants of His judicial righteousness, who were fighting in His name and by His command, when the Lord of the whole earth divided the waters of Jordan before them, threw down the walls of Jericho, filled the Canaanites with fear and despair, killed them with hailstones at Gibeon, and brought to nought all their plans and endeavours to resist the advance of Israel, so that Joshua smote great and mighty nations, and no one could stand before him. Hence the Psalmist was able to write, "Thou didst drive out the heathen with Thy hand, and plantedst them (the Israelites); Thou hast destroyed nations, and cast them out. For they got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm help them; but Thy right hand, and Thine arm, and the light of Thy countenance, because Thou hadst a favour unto them" (Ps. xliv. 2, 3).—And whilst the Israelites were thus proved to be the executors of the penal judgments of God, they acted in perfect accordance with this vocation by the manner in which they carried out the judgment entrusted to them. They submitted cheerfully and obediently to all the appointments of Joshua; they sanctified themselves by the circumcision of all who had remained uncircumcised in the desert and by keeping the passover at Gilgal; they set up the law of the Lord upon Ebal and Gerizim; they executed the ban upon the Canaanites, as the Lord had commanded, and punished Achan and his house for transgressing this ban, that they might expunge the sin from their midst; they vowed, in the most solemn manner, that when they had come into peaceable possession of the promised inheritance, they would renounce all idolatry, would serve Jehovah their God alone, and would hearken to His voice, to renew the covenant with the Lord; and they served the Lord as long as Joshua lived, and the elders after him, who knew all the works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.—(For further remarks upon this subject, see *Hengstenberg's* Dissertations on the Pentateuch, vol. ii. pp. 387–417, Eng. trans., Art. "On the Right of the Israelites to Palestine.")

Thus the contents of the book have their higher unity and their truth in the idea of the justice, holiness, and grace of God, as they were manifested in the most glorious manner in the great historical

event which forms the subject of the whole. Whilst justice was revealed in the case of the Canaanites, and grace in that of the Israelites, the holiness of the Almighty God was manifested in both,—in the Canaanites, who were liable to judgment, through their destruction; and in the Israelites, who were chosen to fellowship with the Lord, through the sanctification of their lives to the faithful performance of the duties of their vocation, both to the honour of God and the glory of His name.

The different views that have been expressed as to the time when the book was written are given more fully in *Keil's* Commentary on Joshua (1847, Eng. trans. 1857), where the exegetical aids are also given.

## EXPOSITION.

### THE PREAMBLE.

### CHAP. I. 1–9.

AFTER the death of Moses the Lord summoned Joshua, the servant of Moses, whom He had appointed as the leader of Israel into Canaan, to go with all the people across the Jordan, and take the land which had been promised to the fathers on oath, assuring him at the same time of His powerful aid, on condition that he observed the law of Moses faithfully. This summons and promise of God form the preamble to the whole book, which is linked on to the conclusion of the Pentateuch by the introductory words, "And it came to pass after the death of Moses, the servant of the Lord," though it is not so closely connected as to warrant the conclusion that the two works have been written by the same author.—Ver. 1. The imperfect with *vav consec.*, the standing mode of expressing a continued action or train of thought, "simply attaches itself by the conjunction 'and' to a completed action, which has either been mentioned before, or is supposed to be well known" (*Ewald*, § 231, *b.*). "*After the death of Moses*," *i.e.* after the expiration of the thirty days of general mourning for him (*vid.* Deut. xxxiv. 8). "*Servant of Jehovah*" is a standing epithet applied to Moses as an honourable title, and founded upon Num. xii. 7, 8 (*vid.* Deut. xxxiv. 5; 1 Kings viii. 56; 2 Kings xviii. 12; Ps. cv. 26, etc.).

On "*Joshua, Moses' minister,*" see at Ex. xvii. 9 and Num. xiii. 16. *Minister* (*meshareth*), as in Ex. xxiv. 13, etc. Although Joshua had already been called by the mouth of the Lord to be the successor of Moses in the task of leading the people into Canaan (Num. xxvii. 15 sqq.), and had not only been presented to the people in this capacity, but had been instituted in this office by the Lord, with the promise of His help (Deut. xxxi. 3–7 and 23), the word of the Lord came to him a second time after the death of Moses, with the command to enter upon the office to which he had been called, and with the promise that He would help him to fulfil its duties, as he had already helped His servant Moses. "Because even some of the bravest men, although fully prepared beforehand, either stand still or hesitate when the thing has to be done: this exhortation to Joshua, to gird himself at once for the expedition, was by no means superfluous; though his call was ratified again not only for his own sake, but in order that the people might not hesitate to follow him with their minds collected and calm, when they saw that he took no step without the guidance of God" (*Calvin*).—Joshua received this word of the Lord by a direct address from God, and not through the intervention of the Urim and Thummim of the high priest; for this appointed medium for the revelation of the will of God, to which he had been referred on the occasion of his first call (Num. xxvii. 21), whenever difficulties should arise in connection with his office, was not sufficient for the renewal and confirmation of his divine calling, since the thing required here was not merely that the will of God should be made known to him, but that he should be inspired with courage and strength for the fulfilment of it, *i.e.* for discharging the duties of his office, just as he afterwards was when in front of the fortified town of Jericho which he was directed to take, where the angel of the Lord appeared to him and assured him of its fall (chap. v. 13). Moreover, the conquest of Canaan formed part of the work which the Lord entrusted to His servant Moses, and in which therefore Joshua was now Moses' successor. Consequently the Lord would be with him as He had been with Moses (ver. 5); and for this reason He revealed His will directly to him, as He had done to Moses, though without talking with him mouth to mouth (Num. xii. 8).—Ver. 2. As Moses had died without having brought the Israelites to Canaan, Joshua was to arise and go with all the nation over *this* Jordan (*i.e.* the river then before him) into the land which the Lord would give them.—Ver. 3. "*Namely, every place that the sole of your foot shall tread*

*upon*," *i.e.* I have given you the whole land, not excepting a single foot's breadth. The perfect, "*I have given*," refers to the counsel of God as having been formed long before, and being now about to be carried into execution. These words, which are connected with Deut. xi. 24, so far as the form is concerned, rest upon the promise of God in Ex. xxiii. 30, 31, to which the words "as I said unto Moses" refer.—Ver. 4. The boundaries of the land are given as in Deut. xi. 24, with the simple difference in form, that the boundary line from the desert (of Arabia) and Lebanon, *i.e.* from the southern and northern extremity, is drawn first of all towards the east to the great river, the Euphrates, and then towards the west to "the great sea, toward the going down of the sun," *i.e.* the Mediterranean; and then between these two *termini ad quem* the more precise definition is inserted, "all the land of the Hittites;" whereas in Deuteronomy the southern, northern, and eastern boundaries are placed in antithesis to the western boundary, and the more precise definition of the country to be taken is given by an enumeration of the different tribes that were to be destroyed by the Israelites (ver. 23). On the oratorical character of these descriptions, see at Gen. xv. 18. The demonstrative pronoun "this," in connection with Lebanon, may be explained from the fact that Lebanon, or at all events Antilibanus, was visible from the Israelitish camp. The expression "*the Hittites*" (see at Gen. x. 15) is used here in a broader sense for Canaanites in general, as in 1 Kings x. 29; 2 Kings vii. 6; Ezek. xvi. 3. The promise in ver. 5*a* is adopted from Deut. xi. 25, where it was made to the whole nation, and specially transferred to Joshua; and ver. 5*b* is repeated from Deut. xxxi. 8, as compared with ver. 6.—Vers. 6-9. The promise is followed by the condition upon which the Lord would fulfil His word. Joshua was to be firm and strong, *i.e.* well-assured, courageous, not alarmed (*vid.* Deut. xxxi. 6). In the first place (ver. 6), he was to rely firmly upon the Lord and His promise, as Moses and the Lord had already told him (Deut. xxxi. 7 and 23), and as is again repeated here, whilst at the same time the expression, "*thou shalt divide for an inheritance*," recalls to mind Deut. i. 38, iii. 28; and in the second place (vers. 7, 8), he was to strive to attain and preserve this firmness by a careful observance of the law. "*Observe to do*," etc., as Moses had already impressed upon the hearts of all the people (Deut. v. 29, cf. xxviii. 14 and ii. 27). The suffix in תִּשְׁמֹר is to be explained on the supposition that the speaker had the book of the law in his mind. The further expansion, in ver. 8, is not only attached

to the exhortations, with which Moses urges upon all the people in Deut. vi. 6, 7, and xi. 18, 19, an uninterrupted study and laying to heart of the commandments of God, but even more closely to the directions to the king, to read every day in the law (Deut. xvii. 19). "*Not to depart out of the mouth,*" is to be constantly *in* the mouth. The law is in our mouth, not only when we are incessantly preaching it, but when we are reading it intelligently for ourselves, or conversing about it with others. To this there was to be added meditation, or reflection upon it both day and night (*vid.* Ps. i. 2). הָגָה does not mean theoretical speculation about the law, such as the Pharisees indulged in, but a practical study of the law, for the purpose of observing it in thought and action, or carrying it out with the heart, the mouth, and the hand. Such a mode of employing it would be sure to be followed by blessings. "*Then shalt thou make thy way prosperous,*" *i.e.* succeed in all thine undertakings (*vid.* Deut. xxviii. 29), "*and act wisely*" (as in Deut. xxix. 8).—Ver. 9. In conclusion, the Lord not only repeats His exhortation to firmness, but the promise that He gave in vers. 5 and 6. "*Have I not*" (*nonne*) is a rhetorical mode of saying, "Behold, I have," the assurance being clothed in the form of an affirmative question. On the words "*be not afraid,*" etc., see Deut. xxxi. 6 and 8.

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## I.—THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN.

### CHAP. I.–XII.

#### PREPARATIONS FOR ENTERING CANAAN.—CHAP. I. 10–II. 24.

In consequence of the divine command (chap. i. 2–9), Joshua began without delay to make the necessary preparations for carrying out the work appointed him; *first* of all by issuing instructions to the people to make ready for crossing the river (i. 10, 11); *secondly*, by reminding the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh of their promise to help the other tribes to conquer Canaan, and calling upon them to fulfil it (vers. 12–18); and *thirdly*, by sending two spies to Jericho, to explore the land, and discover the feelings of its inhabitants (chap. ii.).

Chap. i. 10–18. PREPARATIONS FOR CROSSING THE JORDAN.

—Vers. 10, 11. For the purpose of carrying out the commands of the Lord, Joshua first of all directed the officers of the people (*shoterim:* see at Ex. v. vi.), whose duty it was, as the keepers of the family registers, to attend not only to the levying of the men who were bound to serve in the army, but also to the circulation of the commands of the general, to issue orders to the people in the camp to provide themselves with food, so that they might cross the Jordan within three days, and take the land that was promised them by God. By *zedah*, provision for a journey (Gen. xlii. 25, etc.), we are not to understand manna, for that had already ceased (see at chap. v. 12), but simply the natural produce of the inhabited country. The expression "*in three days*," *i.e.*, as we may see from comparing Gen. xl. 13, 19, with ver. 20, on the third day from the publication of the command, "*will ye go over the Jordan*," is not to be regarded as a prediction of the time when the crossing actually took place, but to be taken as the latest time that could be allowed to the people to prepare for crossing: viz. in this sense, "Prepare you victuals for crossing over the Jordan within three days," *i.e.* that you may be able to leave Shittim within that time, to cross over the Jordan, and commence the conquest of Canaan. If we understand the words in this way, they are in perfect harmony with chap. ii. and iii. According to chap. ii., Joshua sent out spies from Shittim to Jericho, who were obliged to hide themselves for three days in the mountains after their flight from that city (chap. ii. 22), before they could return to the Israelitish camp; so that they were absent three or four days at any rate, and came back at the earliest in the evening or night of the fourth day after they had been sent out. It was not till the morning after this that the Israelites left Shittim and proceeded to the Jordan, where they halted again. Then, three days afterwards, they went across the river (chap. iii. 1, 2), so that at least 4 + 1 + 3, *i.e.* eight whole days must have intervened between the day when the spies were sent out and the day on which the people crossed the river. Joshua no doubt intended to proceed to the Jordan and cross it within three days after despatching the spies; he therefore sent the spies to Jericho on the same day on which he issued the command to the people to prepare for crossing within three days, so that he might reasonably hope that they would fulfil their commission and return in two or three days. But as they were compelled to hide themselves for three days in the mountains, in consequence of the unexpected discovery of their arrival in Jericho, and the despatch of men in

pursuit of them, Joshua could not remove with the people from Shittim and proceed to the Jordan till the day after their return; and even then he could not cross the river at once, but waited three days after reaching the bank of the river before he crossed to the other side (*vid.* chap. iii. 1 sqq.).[1]

Vers. 12–18. Joshua's appeal to the two tribes and a half, to remember the condition on which Moses gave them the land on the east of the Jordan for an inheritance, and to fulfil it, met with a ready response; so that these tribes not only promised to obey his commandments in every respect, but threatened every one with death who should refuse obedience. In recalling this condition to the recollection of the tribes referred to, Joshua follows the expressions in Deut. iii. 18–20, where Moses himself recapitulates his former command, rather than the original passage in Num. xxxii. The expression "*this land*" shows that the speaker was still on the other side of the Jordan. חֲמֻשִׁים, *with the loins girded, i.e.* prepared for war, synonymous with חֲלֻצִים in Deut. iii. 18 and Num. xxxii. 32 (see at Ex. xiii. 18). כָּל־גִּבּוֹרֵי חַיִל, *all the mighty men of valour, i.e.* the brave warriors (as in chap. vi. 2, viii. 3, x. 7, and very frequently in the later books), is not common to this book and Deuteronomy, as *Knobel* maintains, but is altogether strange to the Pentateuch (see p. 9). The word "*all*" (ver. 14, like Num. xxxii. 21, 27) must not be pressed. According to chap. iv. 13, there were only about 40,000 men belonging to the two tribes and a half who crossed the Jordan to take part in the war; whereas, according to Num. xxvi. 7, 18, 34, there were 110,000 men in these tribes who were capable of bearing arms, so that 70,000 must have remained behind for the protection of the women and children and of the flocks and herds, and to defend the land of which they had taken possession. On ver. 15 see Deut. iii. 18; and on the more minute definition of "*on this side* (*lit.* beyond) *Jordan*" by "*toward the sun-rising*,"

[1] In this way the different statements in the three chapters harmonize perfectly well. But the majority of commentators have arranged the order of succession differently and in a very arbitrary way, starting with the unwarrantable assumption that the time referred to in this verse, "within three days," is identical with that in chap. iii. 2, "it came to pass after three days." Upon the strength of this groundless assumption, *Knobel* maintains that there is great confusion in the order of succession of the events described in chap. i.–iii., that chap. i. 11 is irreconcilable with chap. iii. 1–6, and that accounts written by three different authors have been mixed up together in these chapters. (For the different attempts to reconcile the accounts, see *Keil's* Commentary on Joshua, pp. 72–75, note, Eng. trans. Clark, 1857.)

compare the remarks on Num. xxxii. 19. The answer of the two tribes and a half, in which they not only most cheerfully promise their help in the conquest of Canaan, but also express the wish that Joshua may have the help of the Lord (ver. 17 compared with ver. 4), and after threatening all who refuse obedience with death, close with the divine admonition, "*only be strong and of a good courage*" (ver. 18, cf. ver. 6), furnishes a proof of the wish that inspired them to help their brethren, that all the tribes might speedily enter into the peaceable possession of the promised inheritance. The expression "*rebel* against the commandment" is used in Deut. i. 26, 43, ix. 23, 1 Sam. xii. 14, to denote resistance to the commandments of the Lord; here it denotes opposition to His representative, the commander chosen by the Lord, which was to be punished with death, according to the law in Deut. xvii. 12.

Chap. ii. TWO SPIES SENT OVER TO JERICHO. — Ver. 1. Although Joshua had received a promise from the Lord of His almighty help in the conquest of Canaan, he still thought it necessary to do what was requisite on his part to secure the success of the work committed to him, as the help of God does not preclude human action, but rather presupposes it. He therefore sent two men out secretly as spies from Shittim the place of encampment at that time (see at Num. xxv. 1), to view, *i.e.* explore, the land, especially Jericho, the strongly fortified frontier town of Canaan (chap. vi. 1). The word "*secretly*" is connected by the accents with "*saying*," giving them their instructions secretly; but this implies that they were also sent out secretly. This was done partly in order that the Canaanites might not hear of it, and partly in order that, if the report should prove unfavourable, the people might not be thrown into despair, as they had been before in the time of Moses. The spies proceeded to Jericho, and towards evening they entered the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there, *lit.* laid themselves down, intended to remain or sleep there. *Jericho* was two hours' journey to the west of the Jordan, situated in a plain that was formerly very fertile, and celebrated for its palm trees and balsam shrubs, but which is now quite desolate and barren. This plain is encircled on the western side by a naked and barren range of mountains, which stretches as far as Beisan towards the north and to the Dead Sea on the south. Every trace of the town has long since passed away, though it evidently stood somewhere near, and probably on the northern side of, the miserable and dirty village of

*Rîha*, by the Wady Kelt (see *Robinson*, Pal. ii. pp. 279 sqq., 289 sqq.; *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 206 sqq.). *Rahab* is called a *zonah*, *i.e.* a *harlot*, not an innkeeper, as *Josephus*, the *Chaldee* version, and the *Rabbins* render the word. Their entering the house of such a person would not excite so much suspicion. Moreover, the situation of her house against or upon the town wall was one which facilitated escape. But the Lord so guided the course of the spies, that they found in this sinner the very person who was the most suitable for their purpose, and upon whose heart the tidings of the miracles wrought by the living God on behalf of Israel had made such an impression, that she not only informed the spies of the despondency of the Canaanites, but, with believing trust in the power of the God of Israel, concealed the spies from all the inquiries of her countrymen, though at the greatest risk to herself.

Vers. 2–6. When the king of Jericho was informed of the fact that these strange men had entered the house of Rahab, and suspecting their reason for coming, summoned Rahab to give them up, she hid them (*lit. hid him*, *i.e.* each one of the spies: for this change from the plural to the singular see *Ewald*, § 219), and said to the king's messengers: יָכֵן, *recte*, "It is quite correct, the men came to me, but I do not know where they were from; and when in the darkness the gate was at the shutting (*i.e.* ought to be shut: for this construction, see Gen. xv. 12), they went out again, I know not whither. Pursue them quickly, you will certainly overtake them." The writer then adds this explanation in ver. 6: she had hidden them upon the roof of her house among stalks of flax. The expression "*to-night*" (*lit. the* night) in ver. 2 is more precisely defined in ver. 5, viz. as night was coming on, before the town-gate was shut, after which it would have been in vain for them to attempt to leave the town. "*Stalks of flax*," not "cotton pods" (*Arab.*, *J. D. Mich.*), or "tree-flax, *i.e.* cotton," as *Thenius* explains it, but flax stalks or stalk-flax, as distinguished from carded flax, in which there is no wood left, λινοκαλάμη, *stipula lini* (LXX., *Vulg.*). Flax stalks, which grow to the height of three or four feet in Egypt, and attain the thickness of a reed, and would probably be quite as large in the plain of Jericho, the climate of which resembles that of Egypt, would form a very good hiding-place for the spies if they were piled up upon the roof to dry in the sun. The falsehood by which Rahab sought not only to avert all suspicion from herself of any conspiracy with the Israelitish men who had entered her house, but to prevent any further search for them in her house, and to

frustrate the attempt to arrest them, is not to be justified as a lie of necessity told for a good purpose, nor, as *Grotius* maintains, by the unfounded assertion that, "before the preaching of the gospel, a salutary lie was not regarded as a fault even by good men." Nor can it be shown that it was thought "allowable," or even "praiseworthy," simply because the writer mentions the fact without expressing any subjective opinion, or because, as we learn from what follows (vers. 9 sqq.), Rahab was convinced of the truth of the miracles which God had wrought for His people, and acted in firm faith that the true God would give the land of Canaan to the Israelites, and that all opposition made to them would be vain, and would be, in fact, rebellion against the Almighty God himself. For a lie is always a sin. Therefore even if Rahab was not actuated at all by the desire to save herself and her family from destruction, and the motive from which she acted had its roots in her faith in the living God (Heb. xi. 31), so that what she did for the spies, and thereby for the cause of the Lord, was counted to her for righteousness ("justified by works," James ii. 25), yet the course which she adopted was a sin of weakness, which was forgiven her in mercy because of her faith.[1]

Vers. 7–14. Upon this declaration on the part of the woman, the king's messengers ("the men") pursued the spies by the road to the Jordan which leads across the fords. Both the circumstances themselves and the usage of the language require that we should interpret the words in this way; for עַל הַמַּעְבָּרוֹת cannot mean "as far as the fords," and it is very improbable that the officers should have gone across the fords. If they did not succeed in overtaking the spies and apprehending them before they reached the fords, they certainly could not hope to do this on the other side of the river in the neighbourhood of the Israelitish camp. By "*the fords*" with the article we are to understand the ford near to Jericho which was generally used at that time (Judg. iii. 22; 2 Sam. xix. 16 sqq.); but whether this was the one which is commonly used now at the

[1] *Calvin's* estimate is also a correct one: "It has often happened, that even when good men have endeavoured to keep a straight course, they have turned aside into circuitous paths. Rahab acted wrongly when she told a lie and said that the spies had gone; and the action was acceptable to God only because the evil that was mixed with the good was not imputed to her. Yet, although God wished the spies to be delivered, He did not sanction their being protected by a lie." *Augustine* also pronounces the same opinion concerning Rahab as that which he expressed concerning the Hebrew midwives (see the comm. on Ex. i. 21).

mouth of Wady *Shaib*, almost in a straight line to the east of Jericho, or the more southerly one, *el Helu*, above the mouth of Wady Hesban (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 254), to the south of the bathing-place of Christian pilgrims, or *el Meshra* (*Lynch*, p. 155), or *el Mocktaa* (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 320), it is impossible to determine. (On these and other fords near Beisan, and as far up as the Sea of Galilee, see *Rob.* ii. p. 259, and *Ritter Erdk.* xv. pp. 549 sqq.) After the king's messengers had left the town, they shut the gate to prevent the spies from escaping, in case they should be still in the town. אַחֲרֵי בַּאֲשֶׁר for אַחֲרֵי אֲשֶׁר is uncommon, but it is analogous to אַחֲרֵי־כֵן אֲשֶׁר in Gen. vi. 4.—Vers. 8 sqq. Notwithstanding these precautions, the men escaped. As soon as the officers had left Rahab's house, she went to the spies, who were concealed upon the roof, before they had lain down to sleep, which they were probably about to do upon the roof, —a thing of frequent occurrence in the East in summer time,—and confessed to them all that she believed and knew, namely, that God had given the land to the Israelites, and that the dread of them had fallen upon the Canaanites ("*us*," in contrast with "*you*," the Israelites, signifies the Canaanites generally, and not merely the inhabitants of Jericho), and despair had seized upon all the inhabitants of the land. The description of the despair of the Canaanites (ver. 9) is connected, so far as the expressions are concerned, with Ex. xv. 15 and 16, to show that what Moses and the Israelites had sung after crossing the Red Sea was now fulfilled, that the Lord had fulfilled His promise (Ex. xxiii. 27 compared with Deut. ii. 25 and xi. 25), and had put fear and dread upon the Canaanites.—Ver. 10. The report of the drying up of the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 15 sqq.), of the defeat of the mighty kings of the Amorites, and of the conquest of their kingdoms, had produced this effect upon the Canaanites. Even in the last of these occurrences the omnipotence of God had been visibly displayed, so that what the Lord foretold to Moses (Deut. ii. 25) had now taken place; it had filled all the surrounding nations with fear and dread of Israel, and the heart and courage of the Canaanites sank in consequence.—Ver. 11. "*When we heard this*"—Rahab proceeded to tell them, transferring the feelings of her own heart to her countrymen—"*our heart did melt*" (it was thus that the Hebrew depicted utter despair; "the hearts of the people melted, and became as water," chap. vii. 5), "*and there did not remain any more spirit in any one:*" *i.e.* they lost all strength of mind for acting, in consequence of their fear and dread (*vid.* chap. v. 1, though in 1 Kings x. 5 this phrase is used to signify being out of

one's-self from mere astonishment). "*For Jehovah your God is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath.*" To this confession of faith, to which the Israelites were to be brought through the miraculous help of the Lord (Deut. iv. 39), Rahab also attained; although her confession of faith remained so far behind the faith which Moses at that time demanded of Israel, that she only discerned in Jehovah a Deity (*Elohim*) in heaven and upon earth, and therefore had not yet got rid of her polytheism altogether, however close she had come to a true and full confession of the Lord. But these miracles of divine omnipotence which led the heart of this sinner with its susceptibility for religious truth to true faith, and thus became to her a savour of life unto life, produced nothing but hardness in the unbelieving hearts of the rest of the Canaanites, so that they could not escape the judgment of death.—Vers. 12–14. After this confession Rahab entreated the spies to spare her family (father's house), and made them promise her on oath as a sign of their fidelity, that on the capture of Jericho, which is tacitly assumed as self-evident after what had gone before, they would save alive her parents, and brothers and sisters, and all that belonged to them (*i.e.*, according to chap. vi. 23, the children and families of her brothers and sisters), and not put them to death; all of which they promised her on oath. "*A true token*," *lit.* a sign of truth, *i.e.* a sign by which they guaranteed the truth of the kindness for which she asked. This sign consisted in nothing but the solemn oath with which they were to confirm their assurance, and, according to ver. 14, actually did confirm it. The oath itself was taken in these words, "*our soul shall die for you*," by which they pledged their life for the life of Rahab and her family in this sense: God shall punish us with death if we are faithless, and do not spare thy life and the lives of thy relations. Though the name of God is not really expressed, it was implied in the fact that the words are described as swearing by Jehovah. But the spies couple their assurance with this condition, "*if ye utter not this our business*," do not betray us, *sc.* so that we should be pursued, and our life endangered; "*then will we show thee mercy and truth*" (cf. Gen. xxiv. 27).

Vers. 15–24. Rahab then let them down by a rope through the window, namely, into the open country; for her house stood against or upon the town wall, so that she lived upon the wall, and advised them to get to the mountains, that they might not meet the men who had been sent out in pursuit of them, and to hide themselves there for three days, when the pursuers would have returned.—

Vers. 17–20. In conclusion, the spies guarded against any arbitrary interpretation and application of their oath, by imposing three conditions, on the non-fulfilment of which they would be released from their oath. הַזֹּאת for הַזֶּה is to be explained in ver. 17 from the fact that the gender is often disregarded in the use of the pronoun (see *Ewald*, § 183, *a.*), and in ver. 18 from the fact that there the gender is determined by the *nomen rectum* (see *Ewald*, § 317, *d.*).—Ver. 18. The *first* condition was, that when the town was taken Rahab should make her house known to the Israelites, by binding "*the cord of this crimson thread*," *i.e.* this cord made of crimson thread, in the window from which she had let them down. The demonstrative "*this*" leads to the conclusion adopted by *Luther* and others, that "*this cord*" is the rope (חבל) mentioned in ver. 15, as no other cord had been mentioned to which they could refer; and the fact that nothing has been said about the sign in question being either given or received, precludes the idea that the spies gave the cord to Rahab for a sign. The crimson or scarlet colour of the cord (תּוֹלַעַת שָׁנִי = שָׁנִי; see at Ex. xxv. 4), as the colour of vigorous life, made this cord an expressive sign of the preservation of Rahab's life and the lives of her relations. The *second* condition was, that when the town was taken, Rahab should collect together her parents, and her brothers and her sisters, into her own house.—Ver. 19. Whoever went outside the door, his blood should be upon his own head; *i.e.* if he was slain outside by the Israelitish soldiers, he should bear his death as his own fault. But every one who was with her in the house, his blood should fall upon their (the spies') head, if any hand was against them, *i.e.* touched them or did them harm (*vid.* Ex. ix. 3). The formula, "*his blood be upon his head*," is synonymous with the legal formula, "his blood be upon him" (Lev. xx. 9). The *third* condition (ver. 20) is simply a repetition of the principal condition laid down at the very outset (ver. 14).—Ver. 21. When Rahab had accepted all these conditions, she let the men go, and bound the red cord in the window. It is not to be supposed that she did this at once, but merely as soon as it was necessary. It is mentioned here for the purpose of bringing the subject to a close.—Ver. 22. The spies remained three days in the mountains, till the officers returned to the town, after searching for them the whole way in vain. The mountains referred to are probably the range on the northern side of Jericho, which afterwards received the name of *Quarantana* (Arab. *Kuruntul*), a wall of rock rising almost precipitously from the plain to the height of 1200 or

1500 feet, and full of grottoes and caves on the eastern side. These mountains were well adapted for a place of concealment; moreover, they were the nearest to Jericho, as the western range recedes considerably to the south of Wady Kelt (*vid. Rob.* ii. p. 289).—Vers. 23, 24. After this they returned to the camp across the Jordan, and informed Joshua of all that had befallen them, and all that they had heard. On ver. 24, see ver. 9.

### PASSAGE THROUGH THE JORDAN.—CHAP. III. AND IV.

The following morning, after the return of the spies into the camp, Joshua proceeded with the people from Shittim to the bank of the Jordan, to complete the necessary preparations there, and then cross the river and enter Canaan (chap. iii. 1). The crossing of this boundary river of Canaan, or rather the passage through the bed of the river, which had been dried up by a miracle of divine omnipotence at the place of crossing, is narrated in these two chapters in the following manner: first (chap. iii. 1*b*–6), the final preparations for crossing; and then the passage through the bed of the river, and the erection of stones as a permanent memorial of this miracle. This is arranged in three parts: viz. vers. 7–17, the commencement of the crossing; chap. iv. 1–14, its further progress; and chap. iv. 15–24, its close. The account is also arranged upon the following plan: in every one of these three sections the command of God to Joshua is mentioned first (cf. chap. iii. 7, 8, iv. 2, 3, iv. 15, 16); then the communication of this command to the people by Joshua; and finally its execution (chap. iii. 9–17, iv. 4–13, iv. 17–20). This arrangement was adopted by the author for the purpose of bringing distinctly out to view, not only the miracle itself, but also the means with which God associated the performance of the miracle, and also of impressing deeply upon the memory of the people both the divine act and the end secured. In doing this, however, some repetitions were inevitable, in consequence of the endeavour, so peculiar to the Hebrew mode of writing history, to mark and round off the several points in the occurrences described, by such comprehensive statements as anticipate the actual course of events. It is to this arrangement and dovetailing of the different points that we must attribute the distribution of the revelation and commands which Joshua received from God, over the several portions of the history; and consequently we are not to suppose, that at each separate point during the passage God revealed

to Joshua what he was to do, but must rather assume that He actually revealed and commanded whatever was requisite all at once, on the day before the miraculous passage.[1]

Chap. iii. 1–6. *Arrangements for the Passage through the Jordan.* —When they reached the Jordan, the Israelites rested till they passed over. לִין, *to pass the night;* then in a wider sense to tarry, Prov. xv. 31; here it means to rest. According to ver. 2, they stayed there three days. "*At the end* (after the expiration) *of three days*" cannot refer to the three days mentioned in chap. i. 11, if only because of the omission of the article, apart from the reasons given in the note upon chap. i. 11, which preclude the supposition that the two are identical. The reasons why the Israelites stayed three days by the side of the Jordan, after leaving Shittim, are not given, but they are not difficult to guess; for, in the first place, before it could be possible to pass into an enemy's country, not only with an army, but with all the people, including wives, children, and all their possessions, and especially when the river had first of all to be crossed, it must have been necessary to make many preparations, which would easily occupy two or three days. Besides this, the Jordan at that time was so high as to overflow its banks, so that it was impossible to cross the fords, and they were obliged to wait till this obstruction was removed. But as soon as Joshua was assured that the Lord would make a way for His people, he issued the following instructions through the proper officers to all the people in the camp: "*When ye see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, and* (see) *the Levitical priests bear it, then ye shall remove from your place, and go after it: yet there shall be a space between you and it, about two thousand cubits by measure: come not near unto it; that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way yesterday and the day before.*" On the expression "the Levitical priests," see at Deut. xxxi. 25, as compared with ver. 9 and xvii. 9. בֵּינֹו, both here and in chap. viii. 11, should probably be pointed בֵּינוֹ (*vid. Ewald*, § 266, *a.*). This command referred simply to the march from the last resting-place by the Jordan into the river itself, and not to the passage through the

[1] The assertion made by *Paulus*, *Eichhorn*, *Bleek*, *Knobel*, and others, that the account is compounded from two different documents, is founded upon nothing else than a total oversight of the arrangement explained above and doctrinal objections to its miraculous contents. The supposed contradictions, which are cited as proofs, have been introduced into the text, as even *Hauff* acknowledges (*Offenbarungsgl.* pp. 209, 210).

river, during which the priests remained standing with the ark in the bed of the river until the people had all passed through (vers. 8 and 17).[1] The people were to keep about 2000 cubits away from the ark. This was not done, however, to prevent their going wrong in the unknown way, and so missing the ford, for that was impossible under the circumstances; but the ark was carried in front of the people, not so much to show the road as to make a road by dividing the waters of the Jordan, and the people were to keep at a distance from it, that they might not lose sight of the ark, but keep their eyes fixed upon it, and know the road by looking at the ark of the covenant by which the road had been made, *i.e.* might know and observe how the Lord, through the medium of the ark, was leading them to Canaan by a way which they had never traversed before, *i.e.* by a miraculous way.—Vers. 5, 6. Joshua then issued instructions (*a*) to the people to sanctify themselves, because on the morrow the Lord would do wonders among them; and (*b*) to the priests, to carry the ark of the covenant in front of the people. The issuing of these commands with the prediction of the miracle presupposes that the Lord had already made known His will to Joshua, and serves to confirm our conclusions as to the arrangement of the materials. The sanctification of the people did not consist in the washing of their clothes, which is mentioned in Ex. xix. 10, 14, in connection with the act of sanctification, for there was no time for this; nor did it consist in merely changing their clothes, which might be a substitute for washing, according to Gen. xxxv. 2, or in abstinence from connubial intercourse (Ex. xix. 15), for this was only the outward side of sanctification. It consisted in spiritual purification also, *i.e.* in turning the heart to God, in faith and trust in His promise, and in willing obedience to His commandments, that they should lay to heart in a proper way the miracle of grace which the Lord was about to work in the midst of them and on their behalf on the following day. "*Wonders:*" those miraculous displays of the omnipotence of God for the realization of His covenant of grace, which He had already promised in connection

[1] *Knobel* maintains that this statement, according to which the Israelites were more than 2000 cubits from the place of crossing, is not in harmony with ver. 1, where they are said to have been by the Jordan already; but he can only show this supposed discrepancy in the text by so pressing the expression, they "came to Jordan," as to make it mean that the whole nation was encamped so close to the edge of the river, that at the very first step the people took their feet would touch the water.

with the conquest of Canaan (Ex. xxxiv. 10). In ver. 6, where the command to the priests is given, the fulfilment of the command is also mentioned, and the course of events anticipated in consequence.

Vers. 7–17. *Commencement of the Crossing.*—First of all (in vers. 7 and 8), the revelation made by God to Joshua, that He would begin this day to make him great, *i.e.* to glorify him before the Israelites, and the command to the priests who bore the ark of the covenant to stand still in the river, when they came to the water of the Jordan; then (vers. 9–13) the publication of this promise and command to the people; and lastly (vers. 14–17), the carrying out of the command. אָחֵל, I will *begin* to make thee great. The miraculous guidance of the people through the Jordan was only the beginning of the whole series of miracles by which the Lord put His people in possession of the promised land, and glorified Joshua in the sight of Israel in the fulfilment of his office, as He had glorified Moses before. Just as Moses was accredited in the sight of the people, as the servant of the Lord in whom they could trust, by the miraculous division of the Red Sea (Ex. xiv. 31), so Joshua was accredited as the leader of Israel, whom the Almighty God acknowledged as He had His servant Moses, by the similar miracle, the division of the waters of Jordan. Only the most important points in the command of God to the priests are given in ver. 8. The command itself is communicated more fully afterwards in the address to the people, in ver. 13. When they came with the ark to the end of the waters of Jordan,—*i.e.* not to the opposite side, but to the nearest bank; that is to say, as soon as they reached the water in the bed of the river,—they were to stand still (*vid.* ver. 15, and chap. iv. 11), in order, as we see from what follows, to form a dam as it were against the force of the water, which was miraculously arrested in its course, and piled up in a heap. Moses divided the waters of the Red Sea with his *rod;* Joshua was to do the same to the Jordan with the *ark of the covenant,* the appointed symbol and vehicle of the presence of the Almighty God since the conclusion of the covenant. Wherever the ordinary means of grace are at hand, God attaches the operations of His grace to them; for He is a God of order, who does not act in an arbitrary manner in the selection of His means.—Vers. 9, 10. The summons to the children of Israel, *i.e.* to the whole nation in the persons of its representatives, to draw near (גְּשׁוּ for גִּשׁוּ, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 38; Ruth ii. 14) to hear the words of the Lord its God, points to the importance of the following announcement, by which Israel was to learn that there was a

living God in the midst of it, who had the power to fulfil His word. Jehovah is called a "living God," in contrast with the dead gods of the heathen, as a God who proved himself to be living, with special reference to those "divine operations by which God had shown that He was living and watchful on behalf of His people; just as His *being in the midst* of the people did not denote a naked presence, but a striking degree of presence on the part of God in relation to the performance of extraordinary operations, or the manifestation of peculiar care" (*Seb. Schmidt*). The God of Israel would now manifest himself as a living God by the extermination of the Canaanites, seven tribes of whom are enumerated, as in Deut. vii. 1 (see the remarks on this passage). Joshua mentions the destruction of these nations as the purpose which God had in view in the miraculous guidance of Israel through the Jordan, to fill the Israelites with confidence for their entrance into the promised land.[1]—Vers. 11–13. After this inspiriting promise, Joshua informed the people what the Lord intended to do first: "*Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of the whole earth will go before you into Jordan.*" אֲדוֹן כָּל־הָאָרֶץ *is a* genitive dependent upon אֲרוֹן הַבְּרִית, the strict subordination of the construct state being loosened in this case by the article before the *nomen regens*. The punctuators have therefore separated it from the latter by *sakeph-katon*, without thereby explaining it as in opposition or giving any support to the mistaken exposition of *Buxtorff* and *Drusius*, that "the ark of the covenant is called the ruler of the whole earth." The description of Jehovah as "Lord of the whole earth," which is repeated in ver. 13, is very appropriately chosen for the purpose of strengthening confidence in the omnipotence of the Lord. This epithet "exalted the government of God over all the elements of the world, that the Israelites might have no doubt that as seas and rivers are under His control, the waters, although liquid by nature, would become stable at His nod" (*Calvin*). The expression, "*passeth over before you into Jordan,*" is more precisely explained in the course of the narrative:

[1] "He extends the force of the miracle beyond their entrance into the land, and properly so, since the mere opening of a way into a hostile country, from which there would be no retreat, would be nothing but exposure to death. For they would either easily fall, through being entangled in difficulties and in an unknown region, or they would perish through want. Joshua therefore foretold, that when God drove back the river it would be as if He had stretched out His hand to strike all the inhabitants of the land, and that the proof which He gave of His power in their crossing the Jordan would be a certain presage of victory, to be gained over all the tribes."

the ark of the covenant went (was carried) before the people into the river, and then stood still, as the bulwark of the people, till the passage was completed; so that the word "before" indicates the protection which it would afford.—Ver. 12. "*And take to you* (*i.e.* appoint) *twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, one for each tribe.*" For what purpose is not stated here, but is apparent from what follows (chap. iv. 2 sqq.). The choice or appointment of these men was necessarily commanded before the crossing commenced, as they were to stand by the side of Joshua, or near the bearers of the ark of the covenant, so as to be at hand to perform the duty to be entrusted to them (chap. iv. 3 sqq.). Joshua then concludes by foretelling the miracle itself: "*It will come to pass, that when the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the Lord shall settle down in the water of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off; namely, the waters flowing down from above, and shall stand still as one heap.*" "*Shall be cut off*," so as to disappear; namely, at the place where the priests stand with the ark of the covenant. This took place through the waters standing still as a heap, or being heaped up, at some distance above the standing-place. נֵד אֶחָד is an accusative of more precise definition. The expression is taken from the song of Moses (Ex. xv. 8).

The event corresponded to the announcement:—Vers. 14–16. When the people left their tents to go over the Jordan, and the priests, going before with the ark of the covenant, dipped their feet in the water ("the brim of the water," ver. 15, as in ver. 8), although the Jordan was filled over all its banks throughout the whole time of harvest, the waters stood still: the waters flowing down from above stood as a heap at a very great distance off, by the town of Adam, on the side of Zarthan; and the waters flowing down to the salt sea were entirely cut off, so that the people went through the dried bed of the river opposite to Jericho. Vers. 14–16 form one large period, consisting of three protases (vers. 14, 15), the first and third of which are each of them more precisely defined by a circumstantial clause, and also of three apodoses (ver. 16). In the protases the construction passes from the infinitive (בְּנָסְעַ and בְּבוֹא) into the finite verb (נִכְרְתוּ),—a thing of frequent occurrence (see *Ewald*, § 350). The circumstantial clause (ver. 15*b*), "*and the Jordan was filled over all its banks all the days of harvest*," brings out in all its fulness the miracle of the stoppage of the water by the omnipotence of God. Every attempt to explain the miracle as a natural occurrence is thereby prevented; so that *Eichhorn*

pronounces the clause a gloss, and endeavours in this manner to get rid of it altogether. עַל־כָּל־גְּדוֹתָיו might mean full against all its banks, flowing with its banks full, or "full to the brim" (*Robinson*, Pal. ii. p. 262, according to the LXX. and *Vulg.*); but if we compare chap. iv. 18, "the waters of Jordan returned to their place, and went over all its banks as before," with the parallel passage in Isa. viii. 7, "the river comes up over all its channels and goes over all its banks," there can be no doubt that the words refer to an overflowing of the banks, and not merely to their being filled to the brim, so that the words must be rendered "go over the banks." But we must not therefore understand them as meaning that the whole of the Ghor was flooded. The Jordan flows through the Ghor, which is two hours' journey broad at Beisan, and even broader to the south of that (see at Deut. i. 1), in a valley about a quarter of an hour in breadth which lies forty or fifty feet lower, and, being covered with trees and reeds, presents a striking contrast to the sandy slopes which bound it on both sides. In many places this strip of vegetation occupies a still deeper portion of the lower valley, which is enclosed by shallow banks not more than two or three feet high, so that, strictly speaking, we might distinguish three different banks at the places referred to: namely, the upper or outer banks, which form the first slope of the great valley; the lower or middle banks, embracing that strip of land which is covered with vegetation; and then the true banks of the river's bed (see *Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 593 sqq., and *Robinson*, Pal. ii. pp. 254 sqq., and Bibl. Researches, pp. 333 sqq.). The flood never reaches beyond the lower line of the Ghor, which is covered with vegetation, but even in modern times this line has sometimes been overflowed. For example, *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 255, compared with p. 263) found the river so swollen when he visited it in 1838, that it filled its bed to the very brim, and in some places flowed over and covered the ground where the bushes grew. This rise of the water still takes place at the time of harvest in April and at the beginning of May (see at Lev. xxiii. 9 sqq.), and therefore really at the close of the rainy season, and after the snow has been long melted upon Hermon, as it is then that the lake of Tiberias reaches its greatest height, in consequence of the rainy season and the melting of the snow, so that it is only then that the Jordan flows with its full stream into the Dead Sea (*Robinson*, ii. p. 263). At this time of the year the river cannot of course be waded through even at its shallowest fords, whereas this is possible in the summer season, when the water

is low. It is only by swimming that it can possibly be crossed, and even that cannot be accomplished without great danger, as it is ten or twelve feet deep in the neighbourhood of Jericho, and the current is very strong (*vid. Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 301, 320–1; *Rob.* ii. p. 256). Crossing at this season was regarded as a very extraordinary feat in ancient times, so that it is mentioned in 1 Chron. xii. 15 as a heroic act on the part of the brave Gadites. It may possibly have been in this way that the spies crossed and recrossed the river a few days before. But that was altogether impossible for the people of Israel with their wives and children. It was necessary, therefore, that the Lord of the whole earth should make a road by a miracle of His omnipotence, which arrested the descending waters in their course, so that they stood still as a heap "*very far*," *sc.* from the place of crossing, "*by the town of Adam*" (בְּאָדָם must not be altered into מֵאָדָם, from Adam, according to the *Keri*), "*which is by the side of Zarthan.*" The city of *Adam*, which is not mentioned anywhere else (and which *Luther* has erroneously understood as an appellative, according to the Arabic, "people of the city"), is not to be confounded with *Adamah*, in the tribe of Naphtali (chap. xix. 36). The town of *Zarthan*, by the side of which Adam is situated, has also vanished. *Van de Velde* and *Knobel* imagine that the name *Zarthan* has been preserved in the modern *Kurn* (Horn) *Sartabeh*, a long towering rocky ridge on the south-west of the ford of *Damieh*, upon which there are said to be the ruins of a castle. This conjecture is not favoured by any similarity in the names so much as by its situation. For, on the one hand, the mountain slopes off from the end of this rocky ridge, or from the loftiest part of the horn, into a broad shoulder, from which a lower rocky ridge reaches to the Jordan, and seems to join the mountains on the east, so that the Jordan valley is contracted to its narrowest dimensions at this point, and divided into the upper and lower Ghor by the hills of Kurn Sartabeh; and consequently this was apparently the most suitable point for the damming up of the waters of the Jordan (see *Robinson*, Bibl. Researches, pp. 293–4). On the other hand, this site tallies very well with all the notices in the Bible respecting the situation of the town of Zarthan, or Zeredetha (1 Kings vii. 46, compared with 2 Chron. iv. 17): viz. at 1 Kings iv. 12, where Zarthan is said to have been by the side of the territory of Beth-shean; also at 1 Kings vii. 46, where Zarthan and Succoth are opposed to one another; and at Judg. vii. 22, where the reading should be צרדתה, according to the Arabic and Syriac versions.

Hence *Knobel* supposes that *Adam* was situated in the neighbourhood of the present ford *Damieh*, near to which the remains of a bridge belonging to the Roman era are still to be found (*Lynch*, Expedition). The distance of Kurn Sartabeh from Jericho is a little more than fifteen miles, which tallies very well with the expression "very far." Through this heaping up of the waters coming down from above, those which flowed away into the Dead Sea (the sea of the plain, see Deut. iv. 49) were completely cut off (תַּמּוּ נִגְרָתוּ are to be taken together, so that תַּמּוּ merely expresses the adverbial idea wholly, completely), and the people went over, probably in a straight line from Wady Hesbân to Jericho.—Ver. 17. But the priests stood with the ark of the covenant "*in the midst of Jordan*," *i.e.* in the bed of the river, not merely by the river, "*upon dry ground*, הֶחָבֹן," *lit. firmando, i.e. with a firm foot*, whilst all Israel went over upon dry ground, "*till all the people were passed over.*" This could easily have been accomplished in half a day, if the people formed a procession of a mile or upwards in breadth.

Chap. iv. 1–14. *Crossing the River.*—In the account of the crossing, the main point is their taking twelve stones with them from the bed of the river to the opposite side to serve as a memorial. To set forth the importance of this fact as a divine appointment, the command of God to Joshua is mentioned first of all (vers. 2, 3); then the repetition of this command by Joshua to the men appointed for the work (vers. 4–7); and lastly, the carrying out of the instructions (ver. 8). This makes it appear as though God did not give the command to Joshua till after the people had all crossed over, whereas the twelve men had already been chosen for the purpose (chap. iii. 12). But this appearance, and the discrepancy that seems to arise, vanish as soon as we take the different clauses,—which are joined together here by *vav consec.*, according to the simple form of historical composition adopted by the Hebrews, "*and Jehovah spake, saying*," etc. (vers. 2, 3); "*and Joshua called the twelve men*," etc. (ver. 4),—and arrange them in logical order, and with their proper subordination to one another, according to our own modes of thought and conversation, as follows: "Then Joshua called the twelve men,—as Jehovah had commanded him, saying, 'Take you twelve men out of the people,' etc.,—and said to them,"[1]

[1] So far as the meaning is concerned, *Kimchi*, *Calvin*, and many others, were perfectly correct in taking vers. 1*b*–3 as a parenthesis, and rendering וַיֹּאמֶר as a pluperfect, though, grammatically considered, and from a Hebrew point of view, the historical sense with *vav consec.* does not correspond to our pluperfect, but

etc.—Vers. 1 sqq. When all the people had crossed over Jordan,[1] Joshua issued to the twelve men who had been appointed by the twelve tribes the command given to him by God: "*Go before the ark of Jehovah into the midst of Jordan, and take every man a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the Israelites,*" or, as it is expressed in the fuller explanation in the divine command in ver. 3, "*from the standing-place of the priests, the setting up of twelve stones* (הָכִין is an infinitive used as a substantive, or else it should be pointed as a substantive), *and carry them over with you, and lay them down in the place of encampment where ye shall pass the night.*"—Vers. 6, 7. This (viz. their taking the twelve stones with them and setting them up) was to be a sign in Israel; the stones were to serve as a memorial of the miraculous crossing of the Jordan to all succeeding generations. For the expression "*if your children ask to-morrow* (in future)," etc., see Ex. xiii. 14, xii. 26, 27, and Deut. vi. 20, 21.—Ver. 8. The children of Israel carried out these instructions. The execution is ascribed to the "children of Israel," *i.e.* to the whole nation, because the men selected from the twelve tribes acted in the name of the whole nation, and the memorial was a matter of equal importance to all. וַיַּנִּחוּם does not signify that they set up the stones as a memorial, but simply that they laid them down in their place of encampment. The setting up at Gilgal is mentioned for the first time in ver. 20. In addition to this, Joshua set up twelve stones for a memorial, on the spot where the feet of the priests had stood as they bore the ark of the covenant, which stones were there "*to this day*," *i.e.* the time when the account was written. There is nothing to warrant our calling this statement in question, or setting it aside as a probable gloss, either in the circumstance that nothing is said about any divine command to set up these stones, or in the opinion that such

always expresses the succession either of time or thought. This early Hebrew form of thought and narrative is completely overlooked by *Knobel*, when he pronounces vers. 1*b*–3 an interpolation from a second document, and finds the apodosis to ver. 1*a* in ver. 4. The supposed discrepancy—namely, that the setting up of the memorial is not described in vers. 5 sqq. as a divine command, as in vers. 8, 10—by which *Knobel* endeavours to establish his hypothesis, is merely a deduction from the fact that Joshua did not expressly issue his command to the twelve men as a command of Jehovah, and therefore is nothing more than an unmeaning *argumentum e silentio*.

[1] The *piska* in the middle of ver. 1 is an old pre-Masoretic mark, which the Masorites have left, indicating a space in the midst of the verse, and showing that it was the commencement of a *parashah*.

a memorial would have failed of its object, as it could not possibly have remained, but would very speedily have been washed away by the stream. The omission of any reference to a command from God proves nothing, simply because divine commands are frequently hinted at but briefly, so that the substance of them has to be gathered from the account of their execution (compare chap. iii. 7, 8, with iii. 9–13, and iv. 2, 3, with iv. 4–7); and consequently we may assume without hesitation that such a command was given, as the earlier commentators have done. Moreover, the monument did not fail of its object, even if it only existed for a short time. The account of its erection, which was handed down by tradition, would necessarily help to preserve the remembrance of the miraculous occurrence. But it cannot be so absolutely affirmed that these stones would be carried away at once by the stream, so that they could never be seen any more. As the priests did not stand in the middle or deepest part of the river, but just in the bed of the river, and close to its eastern bank, and it was upon this spot that the stones were set up, and as we neither know their size nor the firmness with which they stood, we cannot pronounce any positive opinion as to the possibility of their remaining. It is not likely that they remained there for centuries; but they were intended rather as a memorial for the existing generation and their children, than for a later age, which would be perpetually reminded of the miraculous help of God by the monument erected in Gilgal.—Vers. 10, 11. Whilst Joshua was carrying out all that Jehovah had commanded him to say to the people, according to the command of Moses,—that is to say, whilst the people were passing through the Jordan before the ark, and the twelve men were carrying over the stones out of the river to the resting-place on the other side, and Joshua himself was setting up twelve stones in Jordan for a memorial,—during all this time, the priests stood with the ark in the bed of the river; but after all the people, including the twelve men who took the stones out of the Jordan, had finished crossing, the ark of the Lord passed over, with the priests, before the people: that is to say, it stationed itself again, along with the priests, at the head of the people. The words "*according to all that Moses had commanded Joshua*" do not refer to any special instructions which Moses had given to Joshua with reference to the crossing, for no such instructions are to be found in the Pentateuch, nor can they be inferred from Num. xxvii. 23, Deut. iii. 28, or xxxi. 23; they simply affirm that Joshua carried out all the commands which the Lord had

given him, in accordance with the charge which he received from Moses at the time when he was first called. Moses had called him and instructed him to lead the people into the promised land, in consequence of a divine command; and had given him the promise, at the same time, that Jehovah would be with him as He had been with Moses. This contained *implicite* an admonition to Joshua to do only what the Lord should command him. And if this was how Joshua acted, the execution of the commands of God was also an observance of the command of Moses. The remark in ver. 10*b*, "*and the people hastened and passed over*," *i.e.* passed hastily through the bed of the river, is introduced as an explanation of the fact that the priests stood still in the bed of the river the whole time that the crossing continued. As the priests stood in one spot whilst all the people were passing over, it was necessary that the people should hasten over, lest the strength of the priests should be exhausted. This reason for hastening, however, does not preclude the other,—namely, that the crossing had to be finished in one day, before night came on. The statement in ver. 11, that when all the people had passed over, the ark of the Lord also passed over with the priests, is so far anticipatory of the actual course of the events, that up to this time nothing has been said about the fighting men belonging to the two tribes and a half having passed over (vers. 12, 13); nor has the command of God for the ark to pass over been mentioned (vers. 15 sqq.), though both of these must have preceded the crossing of the ark in order of time. It is to be observed, that, in the words "*the ark of the Lord passed over, and the priests*," the priests are subordinate to the ark, because it was through the medium of the ark of the Lord that the miracle of drying up the river had been effected: it was not by the priests, but by Jehovah the Almighty God, who was enthroned upon the ark, that the waters were commanded to stand still. "*Before the people*" (*Eng. Ver.* "in the presence of the people") has the same signification in ver. 11 as in chap. iii. 6, 14.—Vers. 12, 13. The account of the fighting men of the tribes on the east of the Jordan passing over along with them, in number about 40,000, is added as a supplement, because there was no place in which it could be appropriately inserted before, and yet it was necessary that it should be expressly mentioned that these tribes performed the promise they had given (chap. i. 16, 17), and in what manner they did so. The words וַיַּעַבְרוּ וגו׳ do not imply that these 40,000 men crossed over behind the priests with the ark, which would not only be at variance with the fact so expressly

stated, that the ark of the covenant was the medium of the miraculous division of the water, but also with the distinct statement in ver. 18, that when the priests, with the ark, set their feet upon the dry land, the waters filled the river again as they had done before. The imperfect with *vav consec.* here expresses simply the order of thought, and not of time. "*Arboth Jericho*," the steppes of Jericho, were that portion of the Arabah or Ghor which formed the environs of Jericho, and which widens here into a low-lying plain of about three and a half or four hours' journey in breadth, on account of the western mountains receding considerably to the south of the opening of the Wady Kelt (*Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 263 sqq.).—In ver. 14 the writer mentions still further the fact that the Lord fulfilled His promise (in chap. iii. 7), and by means of this miracle so effectually confirmed the authority of Joshua in the eyes of Israel, that the people feared him all the days of his life as they had feared Moses. "This was not the chief end of the miracle, that Joshua increased in power and authority; but since it was a matter of great importance, so far as the public interests were concerned, that the government of Joshua should be established, it is very properly mentioned, as an addition to the benefits that were otherwise conferred, that he was invested as it were with sacred insignia, which produced such a feeling of veneration among the people, that no one dared to treat him with disrespect" (*Calvin*).

Vers. 15–24. *Termination of the miraculous Passage through the Jordan.*—As soon as the priests left their standing-place in the river with the ark of the covenant, according to the command of God made known to them by Joshua, and the soles of their feet "*tore themselves loose upon the dry ground*" (נָתְקוּ אֶל הַחַרְבָּה, *constructio prægnans*, for they tore themselves loose from the soft soil of the river, and trode upon the dry or firm ground), the waters of the Jordan returned again to their place, and went over all its banks as before (*vid.* chap. iii. 15). This affirms as clearly as possible that it was the ark which kept back the stream.—Ver. 19. The crossing took place on the tenth day of the first month, that is to say, on the same day on which, forty years before, Israel had begun to prepare for going out of Egypt by setting apart the paschal lamb (Ex. xii. 3). After crossing the river, the people encamped at Gilgal, on the eastern border of the territory of Jericho. The place of encampment is called *Gilgal* proleptically in vers. 19 and 20 (see at chap. v. 9).—Vers. 20 sqq. There Joshua set up the

twelve stones, which they had taken over with them out of the Jordan, and explained to the people at the same time the importance of this memorial to their descendants (vers. 21, 22), and the design of the miracle which had been wrought by God (ver. 24). On vers. 21, 22, see vers. 6, 7. אֲשֶׁר (ver. 23), *quod*, as (see Deut. ii. 22). The miracle itself, like the similar one at the Dead Sea, had a double intention, viz. to reveal to the Canaanites the omnipotence of the God of Israel, the strong hand of the Lord (compare Ex. xiv. 4, 18, with chap. vi. 6; and for the expression "the hand of the Lord is mighty," see Ex. iii. 19, vi. 1, etc.), and to serve as an impulse to the Israelites to fear the Lord their God always (see at Ex. xiv. 31).

### CIRCUMCISION OF THE PEOPLE, AND CELEBRATION OF THE PASSOVER AT GILGAL.—CHAP. V. 1–12.

When the Israelites had trodden the soil of Canaan, Joshua began immediately to make arrangements for conquering the land, and destroying its inhabitants. As the Lord had only promised him His assistance on condition that the law given by Moses was faithfully observed (chap. i. 7 sqq.), it was necessary that he should proceed first of all to impose it as an inviolable obligation, not only upon himself, but also upon all the people entrusted to his charge, to fulfil all the precepts of the law, many of which could not be carried out during the journey through the wilderness, whilst many others had only been given with special reference to the time when the people should be dwelling in Canaan. The first duty which devolved upon him in this respect, was to perform the rite of circumcision upon the generation that had been born in the wilderness, and had grown up without circumcision, so that the whole congregation might be included in the covenant of the Lord, and be able to keep the passover, which was to be celebrated in a few days in the manner prescribed by the law.

Vers. 1–9. CIRCUMCISION OF THE PEOPLE.—Ver. 1. Whilst, on the one hand, the approach of the passover rendered it desirable that the circumcision of those who had remained uncircumcised should be carried out without delay, on the other hand the existing circumstances were most favourable for the performance of this covenant duty, inasmuch as the miracle wrought in connection with the passage through the Jordan had thrown the Canaanites into

such alarm that there was no fear of their attacking the Israelitish camp. To indicate this, the impression produced by this miracle is described, namely, that all the kings of Canaan had been thrown into despair in consequence. All the tribes of Canaan are grouped together here under the names of Amorites and Canaanites, the tribes in possession of the mountains being all called Amorites, and those who lived by the sea, *i.e.* by the shore of the Mediterranean, Canaanites (*vid.* chap. i. 4): for the Amorites upon the mountains were the strongest of all the Canaanitish tribes at that time (see at Gen. x. 16); whilst the name Canaanite, *i.e.* the bent one (see at Gen. ix. 25), was peculiarly appropriate to the inhabitants of the lowlands, who relied upon trade more than upon warfare, and were probably dependent upon the strong and mighty Amorites. The application of the expression "*beyond Jordan*" (*Eng. Ver.* "on the side of") to the country on this side, may be explained on the ground that the historian was still writing from the stand-point of the crossing. But in order to prevent any misunderstanding, he adds "*towards the west*," as he had previously added "towards the sunrise," in chap. i. 15, when speaking of the land on the eastern side. That we have the report of an eye-witness here is evident from the words, "until *we* were passed over:" the reading of the *Keri*, עָבְרָם (till *they* were passed over), is nothing but an arbitrary and needless conjecture, and ought not to have been preferred by *Bleek* and others, notwithstanding the fact that the ancient versions and some MSS. also adopt it.—Vers. 2–8. At that time (*sc.* the time of their encampment at Gilgal, and when the Canaanites were in despair) Joshua had the people "*circumcised again, the second time.*" The word שֵׁנִית (a second time) is only added to give emphasis to שׁוּב, or as an explanation of it, and is not to be pressed, either here or in Isa. xi. 11, as though it denoted the repetition of the same act in every respect, *i.e.* of an act of circumcision which had once before been performed upon the whole nation. It merely expresses this meaning, "circumcise the people again, or the second time, as it was formerly circumcised" (*i.e.* a circumcised people, not in the same manner in which it once before had circumcision performed upon it). When the people came out of Egypt they were none of them uncircumcised, as distinctly affirmed in ver. 5; but during their journey through the wilderness circumcision had been neglected, so that now the nation was no longer circumcised, and therefore it was necessary that circumcision should be performed upon the nation as a whole, by circumcising all who were uncir-

cumcised. The opinion of *Masius* and *O. v. Gerlach*, that the expression "the second time" refers to the introduction of circumcision, when Abraham was circumcised with all his house, is very far-fetched. חַרְבוֹת צֻרִים are not "sharp knives," but "*stone knives*," which were used according to ancient custom (see at Ex. iv. 25), literally knives of rocks (the plural *zurim* is occasioned by *charboth*, as in Num. xiii. 32, etc.; the singular might have been used: see *Ewald*, § 270, *c.*).—Ver. 3. Joshua had the circumcision performed "*at the hill of the foreskins*," as the place was afterwards called from the fact that the foreskins were buried there.—Vers. 4–7. The reason for the circumcision of the whole nation was the following: all the fighting men who came out of Egypt had died in the wilderness by the way; for all the people that came out were circumcised; but all that were born in the wilderness during the journey had not been circumcised (בְּצֵאתָם מִמִּצְרַיִם, on their coming out of Egypt, which only came to an end on their arrival in Canaan). They walked forty years in the wilderness; till all the people—that is to say, all the fighting men—who came out of Egypt were consumed, because they had not hearkened to the voice of the Lord, and had been sentenced by the Lord to die in the wilderness (ver. 6; cf. Num. xiv. 26 sqq., xxvi. 64, 65, and Deut. ii. 14–16). But He (Jehovah) set up their sons in their place, *i.e.* He caused them to take their place; and these Joshua circumcised (*i.e.* had them circumcised), for they were uncircumcised, because they had not been circumcised by the way. This explains the necessity for a general circumcision of all the people, but does not state the reason why those who were born in the wilderness had not been circumcised. All that is affirmed in vers. 5 and 7 is, that this had not taken place "by the way." The true reason may be gathered from ver. 6, if we compare the statement made in this verse, "for the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the men that were capable of bearing arms were consumed . . . unto whom the Lord sware that He would not show them the land promised to the fathers," with the sentence pronounced by God to which these words refer, viz. Num. xiv. 29–34. The Lord is then said to have sworn that all the men of twenty years old and upwards, who had murmured against Him, should perish in the wilderness; and though their sons should enter the promised land, they too should pasture, *i.e.* lead a nomad life, for forty years in the wilderness, and bear the apostasy of their fathers, till their bodies had fallen in the desert. This clearly means, that not only was the generation that came out

of Egypt sentenced to die in the wilderness because of its rebellion against the Lord, and therefore rejected by God, but the sons of this generation had to bear the whoredom, *i.e.* the apostasy of their fathers from the Lord, for the period of forty years, until the latter had been utterly consumed; that is to say, during all this time they were to endure the punishment of rejection along with their fathers: with this difference alone, that the sons were not to die in the wilderness, but were to be brought into the promised land after their fathers were dead. The sentence upon the fathers, that their bodies should fall in the desert, was unquestionably a rejection of them on the part of God, an abrogation of the covenant with them. This punishment was also to be borne by their sons; and hence the reason why those who were born in the desert by the way were not circumcised. As the covenant of the Lord with the fathers was abrogated, the sons of the rejected generation were not to receive the covenant sign of circumcision. Nevertheless this abrogation of the covenant with the generation that had been condemned, was not a complete dissolution of the covenant relation, so far as the nation as a whole was concerned, since the whole nation had not been rejected, but only the generation of men that were capable of bearing arms when they came out of Egypt, whilst the younger generation which had grown up in the desert was to be delivered from the ban, which rested upon it as well, and brought into the land of Canaan when the time of punishment had expired. For this reason the Lord did not withdraw from the nation every sign of His grace; but in order that the consciousness might still be sustained in the young and rising generation, that the covenant would be set up again with them when the time of punishment had expired, He left them not only the presence of the pillar of cloud and fire, but also the manna and other tokens of His grace, the continuance of which therefore cannot be adduced as an argument against our view of the time of punishment as a temporary suspension of the covenant. But if this was the reason for the omission of circumcision,[1] it did

[1] This reason was admitted even by *Calvin*, and has been well supported by *Hengstenberg* (Diss. ii. pp. 13 sqq.). The arguments adduced by *Kurtz* in opposition to this view are altogether unfounded. We have already observed that the reason for the suspension is not given in ver. 7; and the further remark, that in ver. 5 ("all the people that were born in the wilderness by the way as they came forth out of Egypt, them they had not circumcised") the book of Joshua dates the suspension not from the sentence of rejection, but expressly and undoubtedly (?) from the departure from Egypt, has no force whatever, unless we so press the word *all* ("all the people that were born in the desert")

not commence till the second year of their journey, viz. at the time when the murmuring nation was rejected at Kadesh (Num. xiv.); so that by "all the people that were born in the wilderness" we are to understand those who were born after that time, and during the last thirty-eight years of their wanderings, just as "all the people that came out of Egypt" are to be understood as signifying only those men who were twenty years old and upwards when they came out. Consequently circumcision was suspended as long as the nation was under the ban of the divine sentence pronounced upon it at Kadesh. This sentence was exhausted when they crossed the brook Zared and entered the country of the Amorites (compare Deut. ii. 14 with Num. xxi. 12, 13). Why, then, was not the circumcision performed during the encampment in the steppes of Moab either

as not to allow of the slightest exception. But this is decidedly precluded by the fact, that we cannot imagine it possible for God to have established His covenant with the people at a time when they had neglected the fundamental law of the covenant, the transgression of which was threatened with destruction (Gen. xvii. 14), by neglecting to circumcise all the children who had been born between the departure from Egypt and the conclusion of the covenant at Sinai. We are also prevented from pressing the little word "all" in this manner by the evident meaning of the words before us. In vers. 4 and 5 the Israelites are divided into two classes: (1) All the people that came out of Egypt and were circumcised; and (2) All the people that were born in the desert and were uncircumcised. The first of these died in the wilderness, the second came to Canaan and were circumcised by Joshua at Gilgal. But if we should press the word "all" in these clauses, it would follow that all the male children who were under twenty years of age at the time of the exodus, either died in the desert or were circumcised a second time at Gilgal. Lastly, it does not follow from ver. 6 that the circumcision was suspended for exactly forty years; for the forty years during which Israel journeyed in the desert until the murmuring generation was consumed, are to be interpreted by Num. xiv. 33, 34, and amounted, chronologically considered, to no more than thirty-eight years and a few months (see the commentary on Num. xxiv. 28 sqq.). On the other hand, the other very general view which *Kurtz* adopts—namely, that the circumcision was omitted during the journey through the desert on account of the hardships connected with travelling, and because it was impossible to have regard to particular families who might wish for longer rest on account of their children who had just been circumcised, and were suffering from the wound, just at the time when they had to decamp and journey onward, and they could not well be left behind—throws but little light upon the subject, as the assumption that the people were constantly wandering about for forty years is altogether an unfounded one. The Israelites were not always wandering about: not only did they stay at Sinai for eleven whole months, but even after that they halted for weeks and months at the different places of encampment, when they might have circumcised their children without the slightest danger of their suffering from the wound.

before or after the numbering, since all those who had been sentenced to die in the wilderness were already dead (Num. xxvi. 65)? The different answers which have been given to this question are some of them wrong, and others incomplete. For example, the opinion held by some, that the actual reason was that the forty years had not yet expired, is incorrect (see Deut. ii. 14). And the uncertainty how long they would remain in the steppes of Moab cannot be adduced as an explanation, as there were no circumstances existing that were likely to occasion a sudden and unexpected departure from Shittim. The reason why Moses did not renew the circumcision before the end of his own life, is to be sought for in the simple fact that he would not undertake an act of such importance without an express command from the Lord, especially as he was himself under sentence to die without entering the promised land. But the Lord did not enjoin the renewal of the covenant sign before Israel had been conducted into the promised land, because He saw fit first of all to incline the hearts of the people to carry out His commandment through this magnificent proof of His grace. It is the rule of divine grace first to give and then to ask. As the Lord did not enjoin circumcision as a covenant duty upon Abraham himself till He had given him a practical proof of His grace by leading him to Canaan, and by repeated promises of a numerous posterity, and of the eventual possession of the land; and just as He did not give the law to the children of Israel at Sinai till He had redeemed them with a mighty arm from the bondage of Egypt, and borne them on eagles' wings, and brought them to Himself, and had thereby made them willing to promise gladly to fulfil all that He should say to them as His covenant nation; so now He did not require the renewal of circumcision, which involved as the covenant sign the observance of the whole law, till He had given His people practical proofs, through the help afforded in the defeat of Sihon and Og, the kings of the Amorites, and in the miraculous division of the waters of Jordan, that He was able to remove all the obstacles that might lie in the way of the fulfilment of His promises, and give them the promised land for their inheritance, as He had sworn to their fathers.

Ver. 8. When the rite of circumcision had been performed upon them all, the people remained quietly in the camp till those who were circumcised had recovered. "*They abode in their places*," *i.e.* sat still as they were, without attempting anything. חָיָה, to revive (Gen. xlv. 27; Job xiv. 14), or recover (2 Kings i. 2, viii. 8,

etc.). The circumcision of the people could not be performed earlier than the day after the crossing of the Jordan, *i.e.*, according to chap. iv. 19, not earlier than the 11th day of the first month. Now, as the passover was to be kept, and actually was kept, on the 14th (ver. 10), the two accounts are said to be irreconcilable, and the account of the circumcision has been set down as a later and unhistorical legend. But the objections made to the historical credibility of this account—viz. that the suffering consequent upon circumcision made a person ill for several days, and according to Gen. xxxiv. 25 was worst on the third day, so that the people could not have kept the passover on that day, and also that the people could not possibly have been all circumcised on one day—are founded upon false assumptions. In the latter, for example, the number of persons to be circumcised is estimated, most absurdly, at a million; whereas, according to the general laws of population, the whole of the male population of Israel, which contained only 601,730 of twenty years of age and upwards, besides 23,000 Levites of a month old and upwards, when the census was taken a short time before in the steppes of Moab, could not amount to more than a million in all, and of these between 280,000 and 330,000 were thirty-eight years old, and therefore, having been born before the sentence was pronounced upon the nation at Kadesh, and for the most part before the exodus from Egypt, had been already circumcised, so that there were only 670,000, or at the most 720,000, to be circumcised now. Consequently the proportion between the circumcised and uncircumcised was one to three or three and a half; and the operation could therefore be completed without any difficulty in the course of a single day. As regards the consequences of this operation, Gen. xxxiv. 25 by no means proves that the pain was most acute on the third day; and even if this really were the case, it would not prevent the keeping of the passover, as the lambs could have been killed and prepared by the 280,000 or 330,000 circumcised men; and even those who were still unwell could join in the meal, since it was only Levitical uncleanness, and not disease or pain, which formed a legal impediment to this (Num. ix. 10 sqq.).[1] But if there were about 300,000 men of the age of forty and upwards who could not only perform the rite of circumcision upon their sons or younger brothers, but, if necessary, were able at any moment to draw the sword, there was no reason what-

[1] For the basis upon which this computation rests, see *Keil's* Commentary on Joshua, p. 139 (Eng. trans. 1857).

ever for their being afraid of an attack on the part of the Canaanites, even if the latter had not been paralyzed by the miraculous crossing of the Jordan.—Ver. 9. When the circumcision was completed, the Lord said to Joshua, "*This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you.*" "The reproach of Egypt" is the reproach proceeding from Egypt, as "the reproach of Moab," in Zeph. ii. 8, is the reproach heaped upon Israel by Moab (cf. Isa. li. 7; Ezek. xvi. 57). We are not to understand by this the Egyptian bondage, or the misery which still cleaved to the Israelites from Egypt, and the still further misery which they had suffered during their journey, on account of the displeasure of Jehovah (*Knobel*), but the reproach involved in the thoughts and sayings of the Egyptians, that Jehovah had brought the Israelites out of Egypt to destroy them in the desert (Ex. xxxii. 12; Num. xiv. 13–16; Deut. ix. 28), which rested upon Israel as long as it was condemned to wander restlessly about and to die in the wilderness. This reproach was rolled away from Israel with the circumcision of the people at Gilgal, inasmuch as this act was a practical declaration of the perfect restoration of the covenant, and a pledge that the Lord would now give them the land of Canaan for their inheritance. From this occurrence the place where the Israelites were encamped received the name of *Gilgal*, viz. "rolling away," from גָּלַל, to roll. This explanation and derivation of the name is not to be pronounced incorrect and unhistorical, simply because it merely preserves the subordinate idea of rolling, instead of the fuller idea of the rolling away of reproach. For the intention was not to form a word which should comprehend the whole affair with exhaustive minuteness, but simply to invent a striking name which should recall the occurrence, like the name *Tomi*, of which Ovid gives the following explanation: *Inde Tomos dictus locus est quia fertur in illo membra soror fratris consecuisse sui* (*Trist.* iii. 9, 33). *Knobel* is wrong in maintaining that the name should be explained in a different way, and that this *Gilgal* is the same as *Geliloth* (circles) in chap. xviii. 17 (see the explanation given at chap. xv. 7). The word *gilgal*, formed from גלל, to roll, signifies primarily rolling, then a wheel (Isa. xxviii. 28); and if by possibility it signifies *orbis* also, like גְּלִיל, this is neither the original nor the only meaning of the word. According to *Josephus* (Ant. v. 1, 4), Israel encamped fifty stadia, *i.e.* two hours and a half, from the Jordan, and ten stadia, or half an hour, from Jericho,—that is to say, in the plain or steppe between Jericho and the Jordan, in an uninhabited and unculti-

vated spot, which received the name of *Gilgal* for the first time, as the place where the Israelites were encamped. No town or village ever existed there, either at the period in question or at any later time. The only other places in which this Gilgal can be shown to be evidently referred to, are Micah vi. 5 and 2 Sam. xix. 16, 41; and the statement made by *Eusebius* in the *Onom. s. v. Galgala*, δείκνυται ὁ τόπος ἔρημος ὡς ἱερὸς θρησκευόμενος, which *Jerome* paraphrases thus, "Even to the present day a deserted place is pointed out at the second mile from Jericho, which is held in amazing reverence by the inhabitants of that region," by no means proves the existence of a town or village there in the time of the Israelites. Consequently it is not to be wondered at, that in spite of repeated search, *Robinson* has not been able to discover any remains of Gilgal to the east of Jericho, or to meet with any Arab who could tell him of such a name in this locality (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 287–8 and 278). On the situation of the Gilgal mentioned in chap. ix. 6, x. 6, etc., see at chap. viii. 35.

Vers. 10–14. THE PASSOVER AT GILGAL.—When the whole nation had been received again into covenant with the Lord by circumcision, they kept the passover, which had no doubt been suspended from the time that they left Sinai (Num. ix. 1 sqq.), on the 14th of the month (Nisan), in the evening (according to the law in Ex. xii. 6, 18, Lev. xxiii. 5, Num. xxviii. 16, Deut. xvi. 6). The next day, *i.e.* on the 16th, or the day after the first feast-day, they ate unleavened loaves and parched corn ("roasted grains," see at Lev. ii. 14) of the produce of the land (עָבוּר,[1] which only occurs in vers. 11 and 12, is synonymous with תְּבוּאָה[2] in ver. 12), *i.e.* corn that had grown in the land of Canaan, as the manna entirely ceased from this day forwards. "*The morrow after the passover*" is used in Num. xxxiii. 3 for the 15th Nisan; but here it must be understood as signifying the 16th, as the produce of the land, of which they ate not only on that day, but, according to ver. 12, throughout that year, cannot mean the corn of the previous year, but the produce of this same year, *i.e.* the new corn, and they were not allowed to eat any of that till it had been sanctified to the Lord by the presentation of the wave sheaf on the second day of the passover (Lev. xxiii. 11). According to Lev. xxiii. 11, the presentation was to take place on the day after the Sabbath, *i.e.* the

[1] Rendered "old corn" in the Eng. version.

[2] Rendered *fruit* in our version.

first day of the feast of Mazzoth, which was kept as a Sabbath, or the 16th of Nisan, as the seven days' feast of Mazzoth commenced on the 15th (Lev. xxiii. 6; Num. xxviii. 17). "On the morrow after the passover" is the same as "on the morrow after the Sabbath" in Lev. xxiii. 11, the term passover being used here not in its original and more restricted sense, in which it applies exclusively to the observance of the paschal meal, which took place on the evening of the 14th, and is expressly distinguished from the seven days' feast of *Mazzoth* (Ex. xii. 23, 27; Lev. xxiii. 5; Num. xxviii. 16), but in the broader sense, which we have already met with in Deut. xvi. 2, in which the name was gradually extended to the whole of the seven days' feast. The writer assumed that the facts themselves were already well known from the Mosaic law, and therefore did not think it necessary to give any fuller explanation. Moreover, the words, "they did eat of the fruit of the land," etc., are not to be understood as signifying that they began to eat unleavened bread for the first time on the 16th Nisan (they had already eaten it as an accompaniment to the paschal lamb); but unleavened bread of the produce of the land, the green corn of that year, was what they ate for the first time on that day. Especial prominence is given to this by the words, "in the self-same day," because not only did the eating of the new corn commence on that day, but from that day forward "*the children of Israel had manna no more.*" This statement is evidently related to Ex. xvi. 35, and must be understood, according to that passage, as merely signifying, that on that day the gift of the manna entirely ceased (see Pentateuch, vol. ii. pp. 70 sqq.).

## APPEARANCE OF THE ANGEL OF THE LORD, AND CONQUEST OF JERICHO.—CHAP. V. 13–VI. 27.

Having been confirmed and fortified in the covenant with the Lord through the observance of the passover, Joshua determined to proceed at once to the work entrusted to him, viz. the conquest of the land of Canaan. But the town of Jericho, which was surrounded with strong walls, as the border defence of Canaan against any foe approaching from the east, had its gates shut before the children of Israel. And whilst Joshua was deep in meditation concerning its capture, the angel of the Lord appeared to him to announce that the Lord had given Jericho and its king into his power, and would miraculously throw down its walls.

Chap. v. 13–vi. 5. APPEARANCE AND MESSAGE OF THE ANGEL OF THE LORD.—Vers. 13-15. When Joshua was by Jericho, בִּיְרִיחוֹ, *lit. in Jericho* (בְּ expressing immediate proximity, the entrance as it were into some other object, *vid. Ewald*, § 217),—that is to say, inside it in thought, meditating upon the conquest of it,—he saw, on lifting up his eyes, a man standing before him with a drawn sword in his hand; and on going up to him, and asking, "*Dost thou belong to us or to our enemies?*" he received this reply: "*Nay* (לֹא is not to be altered into לוֹ, which is the reading adopted in the *Sept.*, *Syr.*, and a few MSS.), *but I am the prince of the army of Jehovah; now I am come.*" The person who had appeared neither belonged to the Israelites nor to their enemies, but was the prince of the army of Jehovah, *i.e.* of the angels. "*The Lord's host*" does not mean "the people of Israel, who were just at the commencement of their warlike enterprise," as *v. Hofmann* supposes; for although the host of Israel who came out of Egypt are called "the hosts of the Lord" in Ex. xii. 41, the Israelites are never called the host or army of Jehovah (in the singular). "The host of Jehovah" is synonymous with "the host of heaven" (1 Kings xxii. 19), and signifies the angels, as in Ps. cxlviii. 2 and ciii. 21. With the words "*now I am come*," the prince of the angels is about to enter upon an explanation of the object of his coming; but he is interrupted in his address by Joshua, who falls down before him, and says, "*What saith my lord to his servant?*" so that now he first of all commands Joshua to take off his shoes, as the place on which he stands is holy. It by no means follows that because Joshua fell down upon the ground and יִּשְׁתָּחוּ (*Eng. Ver.* "*did worship*"), he must have recognised him at once as the angel of the Lord who was equal with God; for the word הִשְׁתַּחֲוָה, which is connected with the falling down, does not always mean divine worship, but very frequently means nothing more than the deep Oriental reverence paid by a dependant to his superior or king (*e.g.* 2 Sam. ix. 6, xiv. 33), and Joshua did not address the person who appeared to him by the name of God, אֲדֹנָי, but simply as אֲדֹנִי, "My lord." In any case, however, Joshua regarded him at once as a superior being, *i.e.* an angel. And he must have recognised him as something more than a created angel of superior rank, that is to say, as the angel of Jehovah who is essentially equal with God, the visible revealer of the invisible God, as soon as he gave him the command to take off his shoes, etc.,—a command which would remind him of the appearance of God to Moses in the burning bush, and which im-

plied that the person who now appeared was the very person who had revealed himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (On the meaning of the command to take off the shoes, see the exposition of Ex. iii. 5.) The object of the divine appearance was indicated by the drawn sword in the hand (cf. Num. xxii. 31), by which he manifested himself as a heavenly warrior, or, as he describes himself to Joshua, as prince of the army of Jehovah. The drawn sword contained in itself this practical explanation: "I am now come with my heavenly army, to make war upon the Canaanites, and to assist thee and thy people" (*Seb. Schmidt*). It was not in a vision that this appearance took place, but it was an actual occurrence belonging to the external world; for Joshua saw the man with the drawn sword at a certain distance from himself, and went up to him to address him,—a fact which would be perfectly incompatible with an inward vision.

Chap. vi. 1–5. When Joshua had taken off his shoes, the prince of the army of God made known to him the object of his coming (vers. 2–5). But before relating the message, the historian first of all inserts a remark concerning the town of Jericho, in the form of an explanatory clause, for the purpose of showing the precise meaning of the declaration which follows.[1] This meaning is to be found not merely in the fact that the Lord was about to give Jericho into the hands of the Israelites, but chiefly in the fact that the town which He was about to give into their hands was so strongly fortified.—Ver. 1. "*Jericho was shutting its gates* (*vid.* Judg. ix. 51), *and closely shut.*" The participles express the permanence of the situation, and the combination of the active and passive in the emphatic form מְסֻגֶּרֶת (LXX. *συγκεκλεισμένη καὶ ὠχυρωμένη*; *Vulg. clausa erat atque munita*) serves to strengthen the idea, to which still further emphasis is given by the clause, "*no one was*

[1] If there is any place in which the division of chapters is unsuitable, it is so here; for the appearance of the prince of the angels does not terminate with chap. v. 15, but what he had come to communicate follows in chap. vi. 2–5, and chap. vi. 1 merely contains an explanatory clause inserted before his message, which serves to throw light upon the situation (*vid. Ewald*, § 341). If we regard the account of the appearance of the angel as terminating with chap. v. 15, as *Knobel* and other commentators have done, we must of necessity assume either that the account has come down to us in a mutilated form, or that the appearance ceased without any commission being given. The one is as incredible as the other. The latter especially is without analogy; for the appearance in Acts x. 9 sqq., which *O. v. Gerlach* cites as similar, contains a very distinct explanation in vers. 13–16.

*going out and in*," *i.e.* so firmly shut that no one *could* go out or in. —Ver. 2. "*And the Lord said to Joshua:*" this is the sequel to chap. v. 15, as ver. 1 is merely a parenthesis and Jehovah is the prince of the army of Jehovah (chap. v. 14), or the angel of Jehovah, who is frequently identified with Jehovah (see Pentateuch, vol. i. pp. 184 sqq.). "*See, I have given into thy hand Jericho and its king, the mighty men of valour.*" ("Have given," referring to the purpose of God, which was already resolved upon, though the fulfilment was still in the future.) "*The mighty men of valour*" (brave warriors) is in apposition to Jericho, regarded as a community, and its king. In vers. 3–5 there follows an explanation of the way in which the Lord would give Jericho into the hand of Joshua. All the Israelitish men of war were to go round the town once a day for six days. פַּעַם אֶחָת . . . תָּקִיפוּ, "*going round about the city once*," serves as a fuller explanation of סַבּוֹתֶם ("*ye shall compass*"). As they marched in this manner round the city, seven priests were to carry seven jubilee trumpets before the ark, which implies that the ark itself was to be carried round the city in solemn procession. But on the seventh day they were to march round the town seven times, and the priests to blow the trumpets; and when there was a blast with the jubilee horn, and the people on hearing the sound of the trumpet raised a great cry, the wall of the town should fall down "*under itself*." The "jubilee trumpets" (*Eng. Ver.* "trumpets of rams' horns") are the same as the "jubilee horn" (*Eng. Ver.* "rams' horn") in ver. 5, for which the abbreviated form *shophar* (trumpet, ver. 5; cf. Ex. xix. 16) or *jobel* (jubilee: Ex. xix. 13) is used. They were not the silver trumpets of the priests (Num. x. 1 sqq.), but large horns, or instruments in the shape of a horn, which gave a loud far-sounding tone (see at Lev. xxiii. 24, xxv. 11). For תְּקַע בְּשׁ, blow the trumpet (*lit.* strike the trumpet), in ver. 4, מָשְׁכוּ בְּקֶרֶן, draw with the horn, *i.e.* blow the horn with long-drawn notes, is used in ver. 5 (see at Ex. xix. 13). The people were then to go up, *i.e.* press into the town over the fallen wall; "*every one straight before him*," *i.e.* every one was to go straight into the town without looking round at his neighbour either on the right hand or on the left (*vid.* ver. 20).

Vers. 6–27. TAKING OF JERICHO.—In the account of this we have first of all a brief statement of the announcement of the divine message by Joshua to the priests and the people (vers. 6, 7); then the execution of the divine command (vers. 8–20); and lastly

the burning of Jericho and deliverance of Rahab (vers. 21–27).— Vers. 6, 7. In communicating the divine command with reference to the arrangements for taking Jericho, Joshua mentions in the first place merely the principal thing to be observed. The plural וַיֹּאמְרוּ ("they said"), in ver. 7, must not be altered, but is to be explained on the ground that Joshua did not make the proclamation to the people himself, but through the medium of the *shoterim*, who were appointed to issue his commands (see chap. i. 10, 11, iii. 2, 3). In this proclamation the more minute instructions concerning the order of march, which had been omitted in vers. 3–5, are given; namely, that הֶחָלוּץ was to march in front of the ark. By חֲלוּצִים, "*the equipped* (or armed) *man*," we are not to understand all the fighting men, as *Knobel* supposes; for in the description of the march which follows, the whole of the fighting men ("all the men of war," ver. 3) are divided into חֲלוּצִים and הַמְאַסֵּף (*Eng. Ver.* "the armed men" and "the rereward," vers. 9 and 13), so that the former can only have formed one division of the army. It is very natural therefore to suppose, as *Kimchi* and *Rashi* do, that the former were the fighting men of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh (חֲלוּצֵי הַצָּבָא, chap. iv. 13), and the latter the fighting men of the rest of the tribes. On the meaning of מְאַסֵּף, see at Num. x. 25. If we turn to the account of the facts themselves, we shall see at once, that in the report of the angel's message, in vers. 3–5, several other points have been passed over for the purpose of avoiding too many repetitions, and have therefore to be gathered from the description of what actually occurred. First of all, in vers. 8–10, we have the appointment of the order of marching, namely, that the ark, with the priests in front carrying the trumpets of jubilee, was to form the centre of the procession, and that one portion of the fighting men was to go in front of it, and the rest to follow after; that the priests were to blow the trumpets every time they marched round during the seven days (vers. 8, 9, 13); and lastly, that it was not till the seventh time of going round, on the seventh day, that the people were to raise the war-cry at the command of Joshua, and then the walls of the town were to fall (vers. 10, 16). There can be no doubt that we are right in assuming that Joshua had received from the angel the command which he issued to the people in vers. 17 sqq., that the whole town, with all its inhabitants and everything in it, was to be given up as a ban to the Lord, at the time when the first announcement concerning the fall of the town was made.

Vers. 8–20. *Execution of the divine Command.*—Vers. 8–11. The march round on the first day; and the instructions as to the war-cry to be raised by the people, which are appended as a supplement in ver. 10. "*Before Jehovah,*" instead of "before the ark of Jehovah," as the signification of the ark was derived entirely from the fact, that it was the medium through which Jehovah communicated His gracious presence to the people. In ver. 9, תָּקְעוּ is in the perfect tense, and we must supply the relative אֲשֶׁר, which is sometimes omitted, not only in poetry, but also in prose, after a definite noun in the accusative (*e.g.* Ex. xviii. 20; see *Ewald*, § 332, *a.*). There is not sufficient ground for altering the form of the word into תִּקְעִי, according to the *Keri*, as תָּקַע is construed in other cases with the accusative הַשּׁוֹפָר, instead of with בְּ, and that not only in poetry, but also in prose (*e.g.* Judg. vii. 22, as compared with vers. 18–20). הָלוֹךְ וְתָקוֹעַ, "*trumpeting continually*" (*Eng. Ver.* "going on and blowing"). הָלוֹךְ is used adverbially, as in Gen. viii. 3, etc. —Ver. 11. "*So the ark of the Lord compassed the city,*" not "Joshua caused the ark to compass the city." The *Hiphil* has only an active, not a causative, meaning here, as in 2 Sam. v. 23, etc.—Vers. 12–14. The march on each of the next five days resembled that on the first. "*So they did six days.*" In ver. 13, וְתָקְעוּ does not stand for וְתָקוֹעַ, but corresponds to וְתָקְעוּ in ver. 8; and the participle הוֹלֵךְ is used interchangeably with the *inf. abs.* הָלוֹךְ, as in Gen. xxvi. 13, Judg. iv. 24, etc., so that the *Keri* הָלוֹךְ is an unnecessary emendation.—Vers. 15–19. On the seventh day the marching round the town commenced very early, at the dawning of the day, that they might go round seven times. כַּמִּשְׁפָּט, in the manner prescribed and carried out on the previous days, which had become a *right* through precept and practice. On the seventh circuit, when the priests had blown the trumpet, Joshua commanded the fighting men to raise a war-cry, announcing to them at the same time that the town, with all that was in it, was to be a ban to the Lord, with the exception of Rahab and the persons in her house, and warning them not to take of that which was laid under the ban, that they might not bring a ban upon the camp of Israel. The construction in ver. 16, "*it came to pass at the seventh time the priests had blown the trumpets, then Joshua said,* . . ." is more spirited than if the conjunction כַּאֲשֶׁר had been used before תָּקְעוּ, or בְּתָקוֹעַ had been used. Because the Lord had given Jericho into the hands of the Israelites, they were to consecrate it to Him as a ban (*cherem*), *i.e.* as a holy thing belonging to Jehovah, which was not to be touched by man, as being

the first-fruits of the land of Canaan. (On *cherem*, see the remarks at Lev. xxvii. 28, 29.) Rahab alone was excepted from this ban, along with all that belonged to her, because she had hidden the spies. The inhabitants of an idolatrous town laid under the ban were to be put to death, together with their cattle, and all the property in the town to be burned, as Moses himself had enjoined on the basis of the law in Lev. xxvii. 29. The only exceptions were metals, gold, silver, and the vessels of brass and iron; these were to be brought into the treasury of the Lord, *i.e.* the treasury of the tabernacle, as being holy to the Lord (ver. 19; *vid.* Num. xxxi. 54). Whoever took to himself anything that had been laid under the ban, exposed himself to the ban, not only because he had brought an abomination into his house, as Moses observes in Deut. vii. 25, in relation to the gold and silver of idols, but because he had wickedly invaded the rights of the Lord, by appropriating that which had been laid under the ban, and had wantonly violated the ban itself. The words, "*beware of the ban, that ye do not ban and take of the ban*" (ver. 18), point to this. As *Lud. de Dieu* observes, "the two things were altogether incompatible, to devote everything to God, and yet to apply a portion to their own private use; either the thing should not have been devoted, or having been devoted, it was their duty to abstain from it." Any such appropriation of what had been laid under the ban would make the camp of Israel itself a ban, and trouble it, *i.e.* bring it into trouble (*conturbare*, cf. Gen. xxxiv. 30). In consequence of the trumpet-blast and the war-cry raised by the people, the walls of the town fell together, and the Israelites rushed into the town and took it, as had been foretold in ver. 5. The position of וַיָּרַע הָעָם is not to be understood as signifying that the people had raised the war-cry before the trumpet-blast, but may be explained on the ground, that in his instructions in ver. 16 Joshua had only mentioned the shouting. But any misinterpretation is prevented by the fact, that it is expressly stated immediately afterwards, that the people did not raise the great shout till they heard the trumpet-blast.

As far as the event itself is concerned, the different attempts which have been made to explain the miraculous overthrow of the walls of Jericho as a natural occurrence, whether by an earthquake, or by mining, or by sudden storming, for which the inhabitants, who had been thrown into a false security by the marvellous procession repeated day after day for several days, were quite unprepared (as *Ewald* has tried to explain the miracle away), really deserve no

serious refutation, being all of them arbitrarily forced upon the text. It is only from the naturalistic stand-point that the miracle could ever be denied; for it not only follows most appropriately upon the miraculous guidance of Israel through the Jordan, but is in perfect harmony with the purpose and spirit of the divine plan of salvation. "It is impossible," says *Hess*, "to imagine a more striking way, in which it could have been shown to the Israelites that Jehovah had given them the town. Now the river must retire to give them an entrance into the land, and now again the wall of the town must fall to make an opening into a fortified place. Two such decisive proofs of the co-operation of Jehovah so shortly after Moses' death, must have furnished a pledge, even to the most sensual, that the same God was with them who had led their fathers so mightily and so miraculously through the Red Sea." That this was *in part* the intention of the miracle, we learn from the close of the narrative (ver. 27). But this does not explain the *true object* of the miracle, or the reason why God gave up this town to the Israelites without any fighting on their part, through the miraculous overthrow of their walls. The reason for this we have to look for in the fact that Jericho was not only the first, but the strongest town of Canaan, and as such was the key to the conquest of the whole land, the possession of which would open the way to the whole, and give the whole, as it were, into their hands. The Lord would give His people the first and strongest town of Canaan, as the first-fruits of the land, without any effort on their part, as a sign that He was about to give them the whole land for a possession, according to His promise; in order that they might not regard the conquest of it as their own work, or the fruit of their own exertions, and look upon the land as a well-merited possession which they could do as they pleased with, but that they might ever use it as a gracious gift from the Lord, which he had merely conferred upon them as a trust, and which He could take away again, whenever they might fall from Him, and render themselves unworthy of His grace. This design on the part of God would of necessity become very obvious in the case of so strongly fortified a town as Jericho, whose walls would appear impregnable to a people that had grown up in the desert and was so utterly without experience in the art of besieging or storming fortified places, and in fact would necessarily remain impregnable, at all events for a long time, without the interposition of God. But if this was the reason why the Lord gave up Jericho to the Israelites by a miracle, it does

not explain either the connection between the blast of trumpets or the war-cry of the people and the falling of the walls, or the reason for the divine instructions that the town was to be marched round every day for seven days, and seven times on the seventh day. Yet as this was an appointment of divine wisdom, it must have had some meaning.

The significance of this repeated marching round the town culminates unquestionably in the ark of the covenant and the trumpet-blast of the priests who went before the ark. In the account before us the ark is constantly called the ark of the Lord, to show that the Lord, who was enthroned upon the cherubim of the ark, was going round the hostile town in the midst of His people; whilst in ver. 8 Jehovah himself is mentioned in the place of the ark of Jehovah. Seven priests went before the ark, bearing jubilee trumpets and blowing during the march. The first time that we read of a trumpet-blast is at Sinai, where the Lord announced His descent upon the mount to the people assembled at the foot to receive Him, not only by other fearful phenomena, but also by a loud and long-continued trumpet-blast (Ex. xix. 16, 19, xx. 14 (18)). After this we find the blowing of trumpets prescribed as part of the Israelitish worship in connection with the observance of the seventh new moon's day (Lev. xxiii. 24), and at the proclamation of the great year of jubilee (Lev. xxv. 9). Just as the trumpet-blast heard by the people when the covenant was made at Sinai was as it were a herald's call, announcing to the tribes of Israel the arrival of the Lord their God to complete His covenant and establish His kingdom upon earth; so the blowing of trumpets in connection with the round of feasts was intended partly to bring the people into remembrance before the Lord year by year at the commencement of the sabbatical month, that He might come to them and grant them the Sabbath rest of His kingdom, and partly at the end of every seven times seven years to announce on the great day of atonement the coming of the great year of grace and freedom, which was to bring to the people of God deliverance from bondage, return to their own possessions, and deliverance from the bitter labours of this earth, and to give them a foretaste of the blessed and glorious liberty to which the children of God would attain at the return of the Lord to perfect His kingdom (*vid.* Pentateuch, vol. ii. pp. 466–7). But when the Lord comes to found, to build up, and to perfect His kingdom upon earth, He also comes to overthrow and destroy the worldly power which opposes His kingdom. The revelation of the grace and mercy of God to His children, goes

ever side by side with the revelation of justice and judgment towards the ungodly who are His foes. If therefore the blast of trumpets was the signal to the congregation of Israel of the gracious arrival of the Lord its God to enter into fellowship with it, no less did it proclaim the advent of judgment to an ungodly world. This shows clearly enough the meaning of the trumpet-blast at Jericho. The priests, who went before the ark of the covenant (the visible throne of the invisible God who dwelt among His people) and in the midst of the hosts of Israel, were to announce through the blast of trumpets both to the Israelites and Canaanites the appearance of the Lord of the whole earth for judgment upon Jericho, the strong bulwark of the Canaanitish power and rule, and to foretel to them through the falling of the walls of this fortification, which followed the blast of trumpets and the war-cry of the soldiers of God, the overthrow of all the strong bulwarks of an ungodly world through the omnipotence of the Lord of heaven and earth. Thus the fall of Jericho became the symbol and type of the overthrow of every worldly power before the Lord, when He should come to lead His people into Canaan and establish His kingdom upon earth. On the ground of this event, the blowing of trumpets is frequently introduced in the writings of the prophets, as the signal and symbolical omen of the manifestations of the Lord in great judgments, through which He destroys one worldly power after another, and thus maintains and extends His kingdom upon earth, and leads it on towards that completion to which it will eventually attain when He descends from heaven in His glory at the time of the last trump, with a great shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, to raise the dead and change the living, to judge the world, cast the devil, death, and hell into the lake of fire, create a new heaven and new earth, and in the new Jerusalem erect the tabernacle of God among men for all eternity (1 Cor. xv. 51 sqq.; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17; Rev. xx. and xxi.).

The appointment of the march round Jericho, which was to be continued for seven days, and to be repeated seven times on the seventh day, was equally significant. The number seven is a symbol in the Scriptures of the work of God and of the perfection already produced or to be eventually secured by Him; a symbol founded upon the creation of the world in six days, and the completion of the works of creation by the resting of God upon the seventh day. Through this arrangement, that the walls of Jericho were not to fall till after they had been marched round for seven days,

and not till after this had been repeated seven times on the seventh day, and then amidst the blast of the jubilee trumpets and the war-cry of the soldiers of the people of God, the destruction of this town, the key to Canaan, was intended by God to become a type of the final destruction at the last day of the power of this world, which exalts itself against the kingdom of God. In this way He not only showed to His congregation that it would not be all at once, but only after long-continued conflict, and at the end of the world, that the worldly power by which it was opposed would be overthrown, but also proved to the enemies of His kingdom, that however long their power might sustain itself in opposition to the kingdom of God, it would at last be destroyed in a moment.

Vers. 21–27. After the taking of Jericho, man and beast were banned, *i.e.* put to death without quarter (ver. 21; cf. ver. 17); Rahab and her relations being the only exceptions. Joshua had directed the two spies to fetch them out of her house, and in the first instance had them taken to a place of safety outside the camp of Israel (vers. 22, 23). "*Her brethren*," *i.e.* her brothers and sisters, as in chap. ii. 13, not her brothers only. "*All that she had*" does not mean all her possessions, but all the persons belonging to her house; and "*all her kindred*" are all her relations by birth or marriage, with their dependants (cf. chap. ii. 13). *Clericus* is correct in observing, that as Rahab's house was built against the town-wall, and rested partly upon it (chap. ii. 15), when the wall fell down, that portion against or upon which the house stood cannot have fallen along with the rest, "otherwise when the wall fell no one would have dared to remain in the house." But we must not draw the further inference, that when the town was burned Rahab's house was spared.[1] וַיַּנִּיחוּם מִחוּץ וגו׳ (ver. 23; cf. Gen. xix. 16), "*they let them rest*," *i.e.* placed them in safety, "*outside the camp of Israel*," *sc.* till they had done all that was requisite for a formal reception into the congregation of the Lord, viz. by giving up idolatry and heathen superstition, and turning to the God of Israel as the only true God (to which circumcision had to be added in the case of the men), and by whatever lustrations and purifications were customary at the time in connection with reception into the covenant with Jehovah, of which we have no further information.—Vers. 24, 25. After man and beast had been put to death,

[1] The statements made by travellers in the middle ages, to the effect that they had seen Rahab's house (*Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 295–6), belong to the delusions of pious superstition.

and Rahab and her relatives had been placed in security, the Israelites set the town on fire with everything in it, excepting the metals, which were taken to the treasury of the tabernacle, as had been commanded in ver. 19. On the conquest of the other towns of Canaan the inhabitants only were put to death, whilst the cattle and the rest of the booty fell to the conquerors, just as in the case of the conquest of the land and towns of Sihon and Og (compare chap. viii. 26, 27, x. 28, with Deut. ii. 34, 35, and iii. 6, 7), as it was only the inhabitants of Canaan that the Lord had commanded to be put under the ban (Deut. vii. 2, xx. 16, 17). In the case of Jericho, on the contrary, men, cattle, and booty were all put under the ban, and the town itself was to be laid in ashes: This was because Jericho was the first town of Canaan which the Lord had given up to His people. Israel was therefore to sacrifice it to the Lord as the first-fruits of the land, and to sanctify it to Him as a thing placed under the ban, for a sign that they had received the whole land as a fief from his hand, and had no wish to grasp as a prey that which belonged to the Lord.—Ver. 25. But Rahab and all that belonged to her Joshua suffered to live, so that she dwelt in Israel "*unto this day.*" It is very evident from this remark, that the account was written not very long after the event.[1]

Vers. 26, 27. But in order to complete the ban pronounced upon Jericho in perfect accordance with the command of God in Deut. xiii. 17, and to make the destruction of it a memorial to posterity of the justice of God sanctifying itself upon the ungodly, Joshua completed the ban with an oath: "*Cursed be the man before the Lord that riseth up and buildeth this city Jericho; he shall lay the foundation thereof at the price of his first-born, and set up its gates at the price of his youngest son*" (בְּ denoting the price of a

[1] Rahab is no doubt the same person as the Rachab mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ, who married Salmon the tribe prince of Judah, to whom she bore Boaz, an ancestor of David (Matt. i. 5). The doubts which *Theophylact* expressed as to the identity of the two, and which *J. Outhov* has since sought to confirm, rest for the most part upon the same doctrinal scruples as those which induced the author of the Chaldee version to make Rahab an innkeeper, namely, the offence taken at her dishonourable calling. *Jerome's* view, on the other hand, is a very satisfactory one. "In the genealogy of the Saviour," he says, "none of the holy women are included, but only those whom the Scriptures blame, that He who came on behalf of sinners, being himself born of sinners, might destroy the sins of all." The different ways in which the name is written, viz. ἡ Ῥαχάβ in Matthew, and Ῥααβ in the Sept. version of Joshua, and in Heb. xi. 31 and James ii. 25, is not enough to throw

thing). The rhythmical parallelism is unmistakeable in this curse. The two last clauses express the thought that the builder of the town would pay for its restoration by the loss of all his sons, from the first-born to the very youngest. The word "buildeth," however, does not refer to the erection of houses upon the site of the town that had been burnt to ashes, but to the restoration of the town as a fortification, the word בָּנָה being frequently used to denote the fortification of a town (*e.g.* 1 Kings xv. 17; 2 Chron. xi. 6, xiv. 5, 6). This is evident in general from the fact that a town is not founded by the erection of a number of houses upon one spot, but by the joining of these houses together into an enclosed whole by means of a surrounding wall, but more particularly from the last words of the verse, in which בָּנָה is explained as יְיַסְּדֶנָּה (lay the foundation thereof) and יַצִּיב דְּלָתֶיהָ (set up the gates of it). Setting up the gates of a town is not setting up doors to the houses, but erecting town-gates, which can only be done when a town-wall has been built. But if setting up the gates would be a sign of the completion of the wall, and therefore of the restoration of the town as a fortification, the "founding" (laying the foundation) mentioned in the parallel clause can only be understood as referring to the foundation of the town-wall. This view of the curse, which is well supported both by the language and the facts, is also confirmed by the subsequent history. Joshua himself allotted Jericho to the Benjamites along with certain other towns (chap. xviii. 21), which proves that he intended them to inhabit it; and accordingly we find the city of palms, *i.e.* Jericho, mentioned afterwards as an inhabited place (Judg. iii. 13; 2 Sam. x. 5), and yet it was not till the time of Ahab that Joshua's curse was fulfilled, when Hiel the Bethelite undertook to make it into a fortified town (1 Kings xvi.

any doubt upon the identity of the two, as *Josephus* always calls the harlot Rahab ἡ Ῥαχάβη. The chronological difficulty, that Salmon and Rahab lived much too soon to have been the parents of Boaz, which is adduced by *Knobel* as an argument against the identity of the mother of Boaz and the harlot Rahab, has no force unless it can be proved that *every* link is given in the genealogy of David (in Ruth iv. 21, 22; 1 Chron. ii. 11; Matt. i. 5), and that Boaz was really the great-grandfather of David; whereas the very opposite, viz. the omission from the genealogies of persons of no celebrity, is placed beyond all doubt by many cases that might be cited. Nothing more is known of Rahab. The accounts of the later Rabbins, such as that she was married to Joshua, or that she was the mother of eight prophets, and others of the same kind, are fables without the slightest historical foundation (see *Lightfoot*, *hor. hebr. et talm.* in Matt. i. 5).

34).[1]—Ver. 27. Thus the Lord was with Joshua, fulfilling His promise to him (chap. i. 5 sqq.), so that his fame spread through all the land.

## ACHAN'S THEFT AND PUNISHMENT.—CHAP. VII.

Ver. 1. At Jericho the Lord had made known to the Canaanites His great and holy name; but before Ai the Israelites were to learn that He would also sanctify Himself on them if they transgressed His covenant, and that the congregation of the Lord could only conquer the power of the world so long as it was faithful to His covenant. But notwithstanding the command which Joshua had enforced upon the people (chap. vi. 18), Achan, a member of the tribe of Judah, laid hands upon the property in Jericho which had been banned, and thus brought the ban upon the children of Israel, the whole nation. His breach of trust is described as unfaithfulness (a trespass) on the part of the children of Israel in the ban, in consequence of which the anger of the Lord was kindled against the whole nation. מָעַל מַעַל, to commit a breach of trust (see at Lev. v. 15), generally against Jehovah, by purloining or withholding what was sanctified to Him, here in the matter of the ban, by appropriating what had been banned to the Lord. This crime was imputed to the whole people, not as *imputatio moralis*, *i.e.* as though the whole nation had shared in Achan's disposition, and cherished in their hearts the same sinful desire which Achan had carried out in action in the theft he had committed; but as *imputatio civilis*, according to which Achan, a member of the nation, had robbed the whole nation of the purity and holiness which it ought to possess before God, through the sin that he had committed, just as the whole body is affected by the sin of a single member.[2] Instead of

[1] *Knobel's* opinion, that the Jericho mentioned between the times of Joshua and Ahab in all probability did not stand upon the old site which Hiel was the first to build upon again, is at variance with 1 Kings xvi. 34, as it is not stated there that he rebuilt the old site of Jericho, but that he began to build the town of Jericho, which existed, according to 2 Sam. x. 5 and Judg. iii. 13, in the time of David, and even of the judges, *i.e.* to restore it as a fortified town; and it is not raised into a truth by any appeal to the statements of *Strabo*, *Appian*, and others, to the effect that Greeks and Romans did not choose places for building upon which any curse rested.

[2] In support of this I cannot do better than quote the most important of the remarks which I made in my former commentary (*Keil* on Joshua, pp. 177-8, Eng. trans.): "However truly the whole Scriptures speak of each man as indi-

*Achan* (the reading here and in chap. xxii. 20) we find *Achar* in 1 Chron. ii. 7, the liquids *n* and *r* being interchanged to allow of a play upon the verb עָכַר in ver. 25. Hence in *Josephus* the name is spelt *Acharos*, and in the *Cod. Vat.* of the LXX. *Achar*, whereas the *Cod. Al.* has *Achan*. Instead of *Zabdi*, we find *Zimri* in 1 Chron. ii. 6, evidently a copyist's error. *Zerah* was the twin-brother of Pharez (Gen. xxxviii. 29, 30). *Matteh*, from נָטָה, to spread out, is used to denote the tribe according to its genealogical ramifications; whilst *shebet* (from an Arabic root signifying "uniform, not curled, but drawn out straight and long without any curvature at all") was applied to the sceptre or straight staff of a magistrate or ruler (never to the stick upon which a person rested), and differed from *matteh*, not only in its primary and literal meaning, but also in the derivative meaning *tribe*, in which it was used to designate the division of the nation referred to, not according to its genealogical ramifications and development, but as a corporate body possessing authority and power. This difference in the ideas expressed by the two words will explain the variations in their use: for example, *matteh* is used here (in vers. 1 and 18), and in chap. xxii. 1–14, and in fact is the term usually employed in the geographical sections; whereas *shebet* is used in vers. 14, 16, in chap. iii. 12, iv. 2, and on many other occasions, in those portions of the historical narratives in which the tribes of Israel are introduced as military powers.

Vers. 2–5. The anger of God, which Achan had brought upon Israel, was manifested to the congregation in connection with their attempt to take *Ai*. This town was situated near Bethaven, on the east of Bethel. *Bethel* was originally called *Luz* (see at Gen. xxviii. 19), a place on the border of Ephraim and Benjamin (chap.

vidually an object of divine mercy and justice, they teach just as truly that a nation is one organic whole, in which the individuals are merely members of the same body, and are not atoms isolated from one another and the whole, since the state as a divine institution is founded upon family relationship, and intended to promote the love of all to one another and to the invisible Head of all. As all then are combined in a fellowship established by God, the good or evil deeds of an individual affect injuriously or beneficially the welfare of the whole society. And, therefore, when we regard the state as a divine organization and not merely as a civil institution, a compact into which men have entered by treaty, we fail to discover caprice and injustice in consequences which necessarily follow from the moral unity of the whole state; namely, that the good or evil deeds of one member are laid to the charge of the entire body. Caprice and injustice we shall always find if we leave out of sight this fundamental unity, and merely look at the fact that the many share the consequences of the sin of one."

xvi. 2, xviii. 13). It is frequently mentioned, was well known at a later time as the city in which Jeroboam established the worship of the calves, and was inhabited again even after the captivity (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 178, 179). It has been preserved, in all probability, in the very extensive ruins called *Beitin* (see *Robinson*, Pal. ii. pp. 126 sqq.), about four hours' journey on horseback to the north of Jerusalem, and on the east of the road which leads from Jerusalem to Sichem (Nablus).[1] No traces have ever been discovered of Bethaven. According to chap. xviii. 12, 13, the northern boundary of the tribe of Benjamin, which ran up from Jericho to the mountains on the west, passed on to the desert of Bethaven, and so onwards to Luz (Bethel). If we compare with this the statement in 1 Sam. xiii. 5, that the Philistines who came against Israel encamped at Michmash before (in front of) Bethaven, according to which Bethaven was on the east or north-east of Michmash (Mukhmas), the desert of Bethaven may very possibly have been nothing more than the table-land which lies between the Wady Mutyah on the north and the Wadys Fuwar and Suweinit (in *Robinson's* map), or Wady Tuwâr (on *Van de Velde's* map), and stretches in a westerly direction from the rocky mountain Kuruntel to Abu Sebah (Subbah). Bethaven would then lie to the south or south-east of Abu Sebah. In that case, however, *Ai* (*Sept. Gai* or *Aggai*, Gen. xii. 8) would neither be found in the inconsiderable ruins to the south of the village of Deir Diwan, as *Robinson* supposes (Pal. ii. pp. 312 sqq.), nor on the site of the present Tell el Hajar, *i.e.* stone hill, three-quarters of an hour to the S.E. of Beitin, on the southern side of the deep and precipitous Wady Mutyah, as *Van de Velde* imagines; but in the ruins of *Medinet Chai* or *Gai*, which *Krafft*[2] and *Strauss*[3] discovered on the flat surface of a mountain that slopes off towards the east, about forty minutes on the eastern side of Geba (Jeba), where "there are considerable ruins surrounded by a circular wall, whilst the place is defended on the south by the valley of Farah, and on the north by the valley of Es Suweinit, with steep shelving walls of rock" (*Strauss: vid. C. Ritter Erdk.* xvi. pp. 526–7). On the advice of the men who were sent out to explore the land, and who

[1] The statements of the *Onomasticon* of *Eusebius s. v.* Ἀγγαί agree with this: Κεῖται Βαιθὴλ ἀπίοντων εἰς Αἰλίαν ἀπὸ Νέας πόλεως ἐν λαιοῖς τῆς ὁδοῦ ἀμφὶ τὸ δωδέκατον ἀπ' Αἰλίας σημεῖον. Also *s. v.* Βαιθήλ: καὶ νῦν ἐστὶ κώμη, Αἰλίας ἀποθεν σημείοις ιβ' (twelve Roman miles are four or five hours' journey).

[2] Topograph. v. Jerusalem, p. ix. [3] Sinai u. Golgoth. pp. 326-7.

described the population on their return as small ("*they are but few*"), Joshua did not send the whole of the fighting men against *Ai*, but only about 3000 men. As there were not more than 12,000 inhabitants (chap. viii. 25), there could hardly have been 3000 fighting men, who might easily have been beaten by 3000 Israelitish warriors. But when the Israelites attacked the town they fled before its inhabitants, who slew about thirty-six men, and pursued them before the gate, *i.e.* outside the town, to the stone quarries, and smote them on the sloping ground. The *Shebarim*, from *sheber*, a breach or fracture, were probably stone quarries near the slope on the east of the town. Nothing more can be decided, as the country has not been thoroughly explored by travellers. On account of this repulse the people lost all their courage. "*The hearts of the people melted*" (see chap. ii. 15): this expression is strengthened still further by the additional clause, "*and became as water.*"

Vers. 6–9. Joshua and the elders of the people were also deeply affected, not so much at the loss of thirty-six men, as because Israel, which was invincible with the help of the Lord, had been beaten, and therefore the Lord must have withdrawn His help. In the deepest grief, with their clothes rent (see at Lev. x. 6) and ashes upon their heads, they fell down before the ark of the Lord (*vid.* Num. xx. 6) until the evening, to pour out their grief before the Lord. Joshua's prayer contains a complaint (ver. 7) and a question addressed to God (vers. 8, 9). The complaint, "*Alas, O Lord Jehovah, wherefore hast Thou brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amarites, to destroy us?*" almost amounts to murmuring, and sounds very much like the complaint which the murmuring people brought against Moses and Aaron in the desert (Num. xiv. 2, 3); but it is very different from the murmuring of the people on that occasion against the guidance of God; for it by no means arose from unbelief, but was simply the bold language of faith wrestling with God in prayer,—faith which could not comprehend the ways of the Lord,—and involved the most urgent appeal to the Lord to carry out His work in the same glorious manner in which it had been begun, with the firm conviction that God could neither relinquish nor alter His purposes of grace. The words which follow, "*Would to God that we had been content* (see at Deut. i. 5) *to remain on the other side of the Jordan,*" assume on the one hand, that previous to the crossing of the river Israel had cherished a longing for the possession of Canaan, and on the

other hand, that this longing might possibly have been the cause of the calamity which had fallen upon the people now, and therefore express the wish that Israel had never cherished any such desire, or that the Lord had never gratified it. (On the unusual form הֵעֲבַרְתָּ for הֶעֱבַרְתָּ, see Ges. § 63, *anm.* 4, and *Ewald*, § 41, *b.*) The *inf. abs.* הַעֲבִיר (with the unusual *i* in the final syllable) is placed for the sake of emphasis after the finite verb, as in Gen. xlvi. 4, etc. The Amorites are the inhabitants of the mountains, as in Gen. xlvi. 4, etc.—Vers. 8, 9. The question which Joshua addresses to God he introduces in this way: "*Pray* (בִּי contracted from בְּעִי), *Lord, what shall I say?*" to modify the boldness of the question which follows. It was not because he did not know what to say, for he proceeded at once to pour out the thoughts of his heart, but because he felt that the thought which he was about to utter might involve a reproach, as if, when God permitted that disaster, He had not thought of His own honour; and as he could not possibly think this, he introduced his words with a supplicatory inquiry. What he proceeds to say in vers. 8, 9, does not contain two co-ordinate clauses, but one simple thought: how would God uphold His great name before the world, when the report that Israel had turned their back before them should reach the Canaanites, and they should come and surround the Israelites, and destroy them without a single trace from off the face of the earth.[1] In the words, "*the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land,*" there is involved the thought that there were other people living in Canaan beside the Canaanites, *e.g.* the Philistines. The question, "*What wilt Thou do with regard to Thy great name?*" signifies, according to the parallel passages, Ex. xxxii. 11, 12, Num. xiv. 13 sqq., Deut. ix. 28, "How wilt Thou preserve Thy great name, which Thou hast acquired thus far in the sight of all nations through the miraculous guidance of Israel, from being misunderstood and blasphemed among the heathen?" ("what wilt Thou do?" as in Gen. xxvi. 29).

Vers. 10–15. The answer of the Lord, which was addressed to Joshua directly and not through the high priest, breathed anger against the sin of Israel. The question, "*Wherefore liest thou upon*

[1] *Calovius* has therefore given the correct interpretation: "When they have destroyed our name, after Thou hast chosen us to be Thy people, and brought us hither with such great wonders, what will become of Thy name? Our name is of little moment, but wilt Thou consult the honour of Thine own name, if Thou destroyest us? For Thou didst promise us this land; and what people is there that will honour Thy name if ours should be destroyed?"

*thy face?*" ("fallest," as in Deut. xxi. 1) involved the reproof that Joshua had no reason to doubt the fidelity of the Lord. Instead of seeking for the cause of the calamity in God, he ought to seek it in the sin of the people.—Ver. 11. Israel had sinned, and that very grievously. This is affirmed in the clauses which follow, and which are rendered emphatic by the repetition of גַּם as an expression of displeasure. The sin of one man was resting as a burden upon the whole nation in the manner explained above (on ver. 1). This sin was a breach of the covenant, being a transgression of the obligation into which the people had entered in their covenant with the Lord, to keep His commandments (Ex. xix. 8, xxiv. 7); yea, it was a grasping at the ban, and a theft, and a concealment, and an appropriation of that which was stolen to their own use. The first three clauses describe the sin in its relation to God, as a grievous offence; the three following according to its true character, as a great, obstinate, and reckless crime. "*They have put it among their own stuff*" (house furniture), viz. to use and appropriate it as their own property. As all that had been stolen was a property consecrated to the Lord, the appropriation of it to private use was the height of wickedness.—Ver. 12. On account of this sin the Israelites could not stand before their foes, because they had fallen under the ban (cf. chap. vi. 18). And until this ban had been removed from their midst, the Lord would not help them any further.—Vers. 13–15. Joshua was to take away this ban from the nation. To discover who had laid hands upon the ban, he was to direct the people to sanctify themselves for the following day (see at chap. iii. 5), and then to cause them to come before God according to their tribes, families, households, and men, that the guilty men might be discovered by lot; and to burn whoever was found guilty, with all that he possessed. נִקְרַב, "*to come near*," *sc.* to Jehovah, *i.e.* to come before His sanctuary. The tribes, families, households, and men, formed the four classes into which the people were organized. As the tribes were divided into families, so these again were subdivided into houses, commonly called fathers' houses, and the fathers' houses again into men, *i.e.* fathers of families (see the remarks on Ex. xviii. 25, 26, and my Bibl. Archæology, § 140). Each of these was represented by its natural head, so that we must picture the affair as conducted in the following manner: in order to discover the tribe, the twelve tribe princes came before the Lord; and in order to discover the family, the heads of families of the tribe that had been taken; and so on to the end, each one in turn being

subjected to the lot. For although it is not distinctly stated that the lot was resorted to in order to discover who was guilty, and that the discovery was actually made in this way, this is very evident from the expression אֲשֶׁר־יִלְכְּדֶנּוּ (*which the Lord taketh*), as this was the technical term employed, according to 1 Sam. xiv. 42, to denote the falling of the lot upon a person (see also 1 Sam. x. 20). Moreover, the lot was frequently resorted to in cases where a crime could not be brought home to a person by the testimony of eye-witnesses (see 1 Sam. xiv. 41, 42; Jonah i. 7; Prov. xviii. 18), as it was firmly believed that the lot was directed by the Lord (Prov. xvi. 33). In what manner the lot was cast we do not know. In all probability little tablets or potsherds were used, with the names written upon them, and these were drawn out of an urn. This may be inferred from a comparison of chap. xviii. 11, and xix. 1, with xviii. 6, 10, according to which the casting of the lot took place in such a manner that the lot *came up* (עָלָה, chap. xviii. 11, xix. 10; Lev. xvi. 9), or *came out* (יָצָא, chap. xix. 1, xvii. 24; Num. xxxiii. 54). הַנִּלְכָּד בַּחֵרֶם, the person taken in (with) the ban, *i.e.* taken by the lot as affected with the ban, was to be burned with fire, of course not alive, but after he had been stoned (ver. 25). The burning of the body of a criminal was regarded as heightening the punishment of death (*vid.* Lev. xx. 14). This punishment was to be inflicted upon him, in the *first* place, because he had broken the covenant of Jehovah; and in the *second* place, because he had wrought folly in Israel, that is to say, had offended grievously against the covenant God, and also against the covenant nation. "*Wrought folly:*" an expression used here, as in Gen. xxxiv. 7, to denote such a crime as was irreconcilable with the honour of Israel as the people of God.

Vers. 16–26. *Execution of the Command.*—Vers. 16–18. Discovery of the guilty man through the lot. In ver. 17 we should expect "the tribe" (*shebet*) or "the families" (*mishpachoth*) of Judah, instead of "*the family.*" The plural *mishpachoth* is adopted in the LXX. and *Vulgate*, and also to be met with in seven MSS.; but this is conjecture rather than the original reading. *Mishpachah* is either used generally, or employed in a collective sense to denote all the families of Judah. There is no ground for altering לְגִבְרִים (man by man) into לְבָתִּים (house by house) in ver. 17, according to some of the MSS.; the expression "man by man" is used simply because it was the representative men who came for the lot to be cast, not only in the case of the fathers' houses, but in that of the families also.

—Ver. 19. When Achan had been discovered to be the criminal, Joshua charged him to give honour and praise to the Lord, and to confess without reserve what he had done. It is not ironically, or with dissimulation, that Joshua addresses him as "my son," but with "sincere paternal regard."[1] "*Give glory to the Lord:*" this is a solemn formula of adjuration, by which a person was summoned to confess the truth before the face of God (cf. John ix. 24). "*And give Him praise:*" the meaning is not, "make confession," but give praise, as Ezra x. 11 clearly shows. Through a confession of the truth Achan was to render to God, as the Omniscient, the praise and honour that were due.—Vers. 20, 21. Achan then acknowledged his sin, and confessed that he had appropriated to himself from among the booty a beautiful Babylonish cloak, 200 shekels of silver, and a tongue of gold of 50 shekels weight. The form וְאֶרְאֵה is not to be abbreviated into וְאֶרְא, according to the *Keri*, as the form is by no means rare in verbs לה. "*A Babylonish cloak*" (*lit.* a cloak of Shinar, or Babylon) is a costly cloak, artistically worked, such as were manufactured in Babylon, and distributed far and wide through the medium of commerce.[2] Two hundred shekels of silver was about £25. "*A tongue of gold*" (according to *Luther*, "ornaments made in the shape of tongues") was certainly a golden ornament in the form of a tongue, the use of which is unknown; it was of considerable size, as it weighed 50 shekels, *i.e.* 13,700 grains. It is not necessary to suppose that it was a golden dagger, as many do, simply because the ancient Romans gave the name *lingula* to an oblong dagger formed in the shape of a tongue. Achan had hidden these things in the ground in the midst of his tent, and the silver "*under it*," *i.e.* under these things (the suffix is neuter, and must be understood as referring to all the things with the exception of the silver). The Babylonish cloak and the tongue of gold were probably placed in

[1] To these remarks *Calvin* also adds: "This example serves as a lesson to judges, that when punishing crimes they should moderate their rigour, and not lose all the feelings of humanity; and, on the other hand, that whilst merciful they should not be careless or remiss."

[2] *Plinius h. n.* viii. 48: *Colores diversos picturæ vestium intexere Babylon maxime celebravit et nomen imposuit.* (See *Heeren Ideen.* i. 2, pp. 205 sqq., and *Movers Phönizier*, ii. 3, pp. 258 sqq.) The *Sept.* rendering is ψιλὴ ποικίλη, *i.e.* a Babylonian cloak ornamented with pictures. It is called ψιλὴ because it was cut smooth, and ποικίλη because it was covered with coloured figures, either of men or animals, sometimes woven, at other times worked with the needle (*Fischer de vers. græc. libr.* V. T. pp. 87–8).

a chest; at any rate they would be carefully packed up, and the silver was placed underneath. The article in הָאֹהֶל, which occurs twice, as it also does in chap. viii. 33, Lev. xxvii. 33, Micah ii. 12, is probably to be explained in the manner suggested by *Hengstenberg*, viz. that the article and noun became so fused into one, that the former lost its proper force.—Vers. 22, 23. Joshua sent two messengers directly to Achan's tent to fetch the things, and when they were brought he had them laid down before Jehovah, *i.e.* before the tabernacle, where the whole affair had taken place. הִצִּיק, here and in 2 Sam. xv. 24, signifies to lay down (synonymous with הִצִּיג), whilst the *Hiphil* form is used for pouring out.—Vers. 24, 25. Then Joshua and all Israel, *i.e.* the whole nation in the person of its heads or representatives, took Achan, together with the things which he had purloined, and his sons and daughters, his cattle, and his tent with all its furniture, and brought them into the valley of Achor, where they stoned them to death and then burned them, after Joshua had once more pronounced this sentence upon him in the place of judgment: "*How hast thou troubled us*" (עָכַר, as in chap. vi. 18, to bring into trouble)! "*The Lord will trouble thee this day.*" It by no means follows from the expression "stoned him" in ver. 25, that Achan only was stoned. The singular pronoun is used to designate Achan alone, as being the principal person concerned. But it is obvious enough that his children and cattle were stoned, from what follows in the very same verse: "*They burned them* (the persons stoned to death, and their things) *with fire, and heaped up stones upon them.*" It is true that in Deut. xxiv. 16 the Mosaic law expressly forbids the putting to death of children for their fathers' sins; and many have imagined, therefore, that Achan's sons and daughters were simply taken into the valley to be spectators of the punishment inflicted upon the father, that it might be a warning to them. But for what reason, then, were Achan's cattle (oxen, sheep, and asses) taken out along with him? Certainly for no other purpose than to be stoned at the same time as he. The law in question only referred to the punishment of ordinary criminals, and therefore was not applicable at all to the present case, in which the punishment was commanded by the Lord himself. Achan had fallen under the ban by laying hands upon what had been banned, and consequently was exposed to the same punishment as a town that had fallen away to idolatry (Deut. xiii. 16, 17). The law of the ban was founded upon the assumption, that the conduct to be punished was

not a crime of which the individual only was guilty, but one in which the whole family of the leading sinner, in fact everything connected with him, participated. Thus, in the case before us, the things themselves had been abstracted from the booty by Achan alone; but he had hidden them in his tent, buried them in the earth, which could hardly have been done so secretly that his sons and daughters knew nothing of it. By so doing he had made his family participators in his theft; they therefore fell under the ban along with him, together with their tent, their cattle, and the rest of their property, which were all involved in the consequences of His crime. The clause וַיִּסְקְלוּ אֹתָם בָּאֲבָנִים does not refer to the stoning as a capital punishment, but to the casting of stones upon the bodies after they were dead and had been burned, for the purpose of erecting a heap of stones upon them as a memorial of the disgrace (*vid.* chap. viii. 29; 2 Sam. xviii. 17).—In ver. 26, the account of the whole affair closes with these two remarks: (1) That after the punishment of the malefactor the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger; and (2) That the valley in which Achan suffered his punishment received the name of *Achor* (troubling) with special reference to the fact that Joshua had described his punishment as well as Achan's sin as עָכַר (troubling: see ver. 25), and that it retained this name down to the writer's own time. With regard to the situation of this valley, it is evident from the word וַיַּעֲלוּ in ver. 24 that it was on higher ground than Gilgal and Jericho, probably in one of the ranges of hills that intersect the plain of Jericho, and from chap. xv. 7, where the northern border of the possessions of Judah is said to have passed through this valley, that it is to be looked for to the south of Jericho. The only other places in which there is any allusion to this event are Hos. ii. 17 and Isa. lxv. 10.

## CONQUEST OF AI. BLESSINGS AND CURSES UPON GERIZIM AND EBAL.—CHAP. VIII.

Vers. 1–29. CONQUEST AND BURNING OF AI.—Vers. 1, 2. After the ban which rested upon the people had been wiped away, the Lord encouraged Joshua to make war upon Ai, promising him that the city should be taken, and giving him instructions what to do to ensure the success of his undertaking. With evident allusion to Joshua's despair after the failure of the first attack, the Lord commences with these words, "*Fear not, neither be thou dismayed*" (as in Deut. i. 21, xxxi. 8), and then commands him to go against

Ai with all the people of war. By "all the people of war" we are hardly to understand all the men out of the whole nation who were capable of bearing arms; but as only a third of these were contributed by the two tribes and a half to cross over into Canaan and take part in the war (see p. 32), the other tribes also are not likely to have levied more than a third, say about 160,000, which would form altogether an army of about 200,000 men. But even such an army as this seems out of all proportion to the size of Ai, with its 12,000 inhabitants (ver. 25). On the other hand, however, we must bear in mind that the expression "*all* the people of war" simply denotes the whole army, in contrast with the advice of the spies that only a portion of the army should be sent (chap. vii. 3), so that we are not warranted in pressing the word "all" too absolutely;[1] and also that this command of God was not given with reference to the conquest of Ai alone, but applied at the same time to the conquest of the whole land, which Joshua was not to attempt by sending out detachments only, but was to carry out with the whole of the force at his command. עָלָה, to go up, is applied to the advance of an army against a hostile town, independently of the question whether the town was situated upon an eminence or not, as every town that had to be taken was looked upon as a height to be scaled, though as a fact in this instance the army had really to ascend from Jericho to Ai, which was situated up in the mountains. (On ver. 1*b*, see chap. vi. 2.) "*His land*" is the country round, which belonged to the town and was under its king. —Ver. 2. Joshua was to do the same to Ai and her king as he had already done to Jericho and her king, except that in this case the conquerors were to be allowed to appropriate the booty and the cattle to themselves. In order to conquer the town, he was to lay an ambush behind it.[2] אֹרֵב, a collective noun, signifying the persons concealed in ambush; מְאֹרָב (ver. 9), the place of ambush. "*Behind it*," *i.e.* on the west of the town.

Vers. 3–13. Accordingly Joshua set out with all the people of war against Ai, and selected 30,000 brave men, and sent them out in the night, with instructions to station themselves as an ambuscade

[1] "As we have just before seen how their hearts melted, God *consulted their weakness*, by putting no heavier burden upon them than they were able to bear, until they had recovered from their alarm, and hearkened readily to His commands."—*Calvin.*

[2] The much agitated question, whether it could be worthy of God to employ stratagem in war, to which different replies have been given, has been answered

behind the town, and at no great distance from it. As the distance from Gilgal to Ai was about fifteen miles, and the road runs pretty straight in a north-westerly direction from Jericho through the Wady Faran, the detachment sent forward might easily accomplish the distance in a night, so as to arrive on the western side of Ai before the break of day. They were then to hold themselves in readiness to fight. He (Joshua) himself would approach the town with the people of war that remained with him; and if the inhabitants of Ai should come out against him as they did before, they would flee before them till they had drawn them quite away from their town (ver. 5). This was to be expected; "*for they will say, They flee before us, as at the first: and we will flee before them*" (ver. 6). When this was done, the warriors were to come forth from their ambush, fall upon the town, and set it on fire (vers. 7, 8). Having been sent away with these instructions, the 30,000 men went into ambush, and posted themselves "*between Bethel and Ai, on the west side of Ai*" (ver. 9), *i.e.*, according to *Strauss*, in the Wady es Suweinit, to the north-west of Ai, where it forms almost a perpendicular wall, near to which the ruins of *Chai* are to be found, though "not near enough to the rocky wady for it to be possible to look down its almost perpendicular wall" (*Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. p. 528). Joshua remained for the night in the midst of the people, *i.e.* in the camp of that portion of the army that had gone with him towards Ai; not in Gilgal, as *Knobel* supposes.—Ver. 10. The next morning he mustered the people as early as possible, and then went, with the elders of Israel, "before the people of Ai." The elders of Israel are not "military tribunes, who were called *elders* because of their superiority in military affairs," as *Masius* supposes, but, as in every other case, the heads of the people, who accompanied Joshua as counsellors.—Ver. 11. The whole of the people of war also advanced with him to the front of the town, and encamped on the north of Ai, so that the valley was between it (בינו, as in chap. iii. 4) and Ai. This was probably a side valley branching off towards the south from the eastern continuation of the Wady es Suweinit.—In vers. 12, 13, the account of the prepara-

quite correctly by *Calvin*. "Surely," he says, "wars are not carried on by striking alone; but they are considered the best generals who succeed through art and counsel more than by force. . . . Therefore, if war is lawful at all, it is beyond all controversy that the way is perfectly clear for the use of the customary arts of warfare, provided there is no breach of faith in the violation of treaty or truce, or in any other way."

tions for the attack is rounded off by a repetition of the notice as to the forces engaged, and in some respects a more exact description of their disposition. Joshua, it is stated in ver. 12, took about 5000 men and placed them in ambush between Bethel and Ai, on the west of the town. As the place where this ambuscade was posted is described in precisely the same terms as that which was occupied, according to ver. 9, by the 30,000 men who were sent out to form an ambuscade in the night before the advance of the main army against Ai (for the substitution of "*the city*" for Ai cannot possibly indicate a difference in the locality), the view held by the majority of commentators, that ver. 12 refers to a second ambuscade, which Joshua sent out in addition to the 30,000, and posted by the side of them, is even more than questionable, and is by no means raised into a probability by the expression אֶת־עֲקֵבוֹ (*Eng.* "their liers in wait") in ver. 13. The description of the place, "on the west of the city," leaves no doubt whatever that "their liers in wait" are simply the ambuscade (אֹרֵב) mentioned in ver. 12, which was sent out from the whole army, *i.e.* the ambuscade that was posted on the west of the town. עָקֵב signifies literally the lier in wait (Ps. xlix. 5), from עָקַב, *insidiari*, and is synonymous with אֹרֵב. The meaning which *Gesenius* and others attach to the word, viz. the rear or hinder part of the army, cannot be sustained from Gen. xlix. 19. If we add to this the fact that ver. 13*a* is obviously nothing more than a repetition of the description already given in ver. 11 of the place where the main army was posted, and therefore bears the character of a closing remark introduced to wind up the previous account, we cannot regard ver. 12 as anything more than a repetition of the statements in vers. 3, 9, and can only explain the discrepancy with regard to the number of men who were placed in ambush, by supposing that, through a copyist's error, the number which was expressed at first in simple letters has in one instance been given wrongly. The mistake, however, is not to be found in the 5000 (ver. 12), but in the 30,000 in ver. 3, where ה has been confounded with ו. For a detachment of 5000 men would be quite sufficient for an ambuscade that had only to enter the town after the soldiers had left it in pursuit of the Israelites, and to set it on fire, whereas it hardly seems possible that 30,000 men should have been posted in ambush so near to the town.[1]—In ver. 13*a*, הָעָם

[1] We need have no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that there is a mistake in the number given in ver. 3, as the occurrence of such mistakes in the historical books is fully established by a comparison of the numbers given

(the people) is to be taken as the subject of the sentence: "*The people had set all the host, that was on the north of the city, and its ambuscade on the west of the city.*" In the night, namely the night before the army arrived at the north of the town, Joshua went through the midst of the valley, which separated the Israelites from the town, so that in the morning he stood with all the army close before the town.

Vers. 14–23. When the king of Ai saw the Israelites, he hurried out in the morning against them to battle at the (previously) appointed place (לְמוֹעֵד, *in locum condictum*, as in 1 Sam. xx. 35) before the steppe (*Arabah*, not the valley of the Jordan, but the steppe or desert of Bethaven; see at chap. vii. 2), as he knew nothing of the ambuscade behind the town.—Ver. 15. But the Israelites let them beat them, and fled along the desert (of Bethaven).—Vers. 16, 17. And all the people in the town were called together to pursue the Israelites, and were drawn away from the town, so that not a man, *i.e.* not a single soldier who could take part in the pursuit, remained either in Ai or the neighbouring town of Bethel, and the town stood open behind them. It is evident from ver. 17 that the inhabitants of Bethel, which was about three hours' journey from Ai, took part in the battle, probably in consequence of a treaty which the king of Ai had made with them in the expectation of a renewed and still stronger attack on the part of the Israelites. Nothing further is known upon this point; nor can anything be inferred from the fact that the king of Bethel is included in the list of the kings slain by Joshua (chap. xii. 16). Consequently, we cannot decide whether the Bethelites came to the help of the Aites

in the books of Samuel and Kings with those in the books of Chronicles, and is admitted by every commentator. In my earlier commentary on Joshua, I attempted to solve the difficulty by the twofold assumption: *first*, that ver. 12 contains a supplementary statement, in which the number of the men posted in ambush is given for the first time; and *secondly*, that the historian forgot to notice that out of the 30,000 men whom Joshua chose to make war upon Ai, 5000 were set apart to lie in ambush. But, on further examination of the text, I have come to the conclusion that the second assumption is irreconcilable with the distinct words of ver. 3, and feel obliged to give it up. On the other hand, I still adhere to the conviction that there is not sufficient ground either for the assumption that vers. 12, 13, contain an old marginal gloss that has crept into the text, or for the hypothesis of *Ewald* and *Knobel*, that these verses were introduced by the last editor of the book out of some other document. The last hypothesis amounts to a charge of thoughtlessness against the latest editor, which is hardly reconcilable with the endeavour, for which he is praised in other places, to reconcile the discrepancies in the different documents.

for the first time on the day of the battle itself, or, what is more probable, had already sent men to Ai, to help to repulse the expected attack of the Israelites upon that town.—Vers. 18, 19. At the command of God Joshua now stretched out the javelin in his hand towards the town. At this sign the ambuscade rose hastily from its concealment, rushed into the town, and set it on fire. נָטָה בַּכִּידוֹן signifies to stretch out the hand with the spear. The object יָד, which is missing (cf. vers. 19, 26), may easily be supplied from the apposition אֲשֶׁר בִּידוֹ. The raising of the javelin would probably be visible at a considerable distance, even if it was not provided with a small flag, as both earlier and later commentators assume, since Joshua would hardly be in the midst of the flying Israelites, but would take his station as commander upon some eminence on one side. And the men in ambush would have scouts posted to watch for the signal, which had certainly been arranged beforehand, and convey the information to the others.—Vers. 20, 21. The men of Ai then turned round behind them, being evidently led to do so by the Israelites, who may have continued looking round to the town of Ai when the signal had been given by Joshua, to see whether the men in ambush had taken it and set it on fire, and as soon as they saw that this had been done began to offer still further resistance to their pursuers, and to defend themselves vigorously against them. On looking back to their town the Aites saw the smoke of the town ascending towards heaven: "*and there were not hands in them to flee hither and thither*," *i.e.* they were utterly unable to flee. "*Hands*," as the organs of enterprise and labour, in the sense of "strength," not "room," for which we should expect to find לָהֶם instead of בָּהֶם. There is an analogous passage in Ps. lxxvi. 6, "None of the men of might have found their hands." For the people that fled to the wilderness (the Israelitish army) turned against the pursuers (the warriors of Ai), or, as is added by way of explanation in ver. 21, when Joshua and all Israel saw the town in the hands of the ambuscade, and the smoke ascending, they turned round and smote the people of Ai; and (ver. 22) these (*i.e.* the Israelites who had formed the ambuscade) came out of the town to meet them. "*These*" (*Eng.* the other), as contrasted with "the people that fled" in ver. 20, refers back to "the ambush" in ver. 19. In this way the Aites were in the midst of the people of Israel, who came from this side and that side, and smote them to the last man. "*So that they let none of them remain:*" as in Num. xxi. 35 and Deut. iii. 3, except that in

this case it is strengthened still further by וּפָלִיט, "*or escape.*"—Ver. 23. The king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua.

Vers. 24–29. When all the men of Ai, who had come out to pursue the Israelites, had been slain upon the field (namely) in the desert, all Israel returned to Ai and smote it (the town, *i.e.* the inhabitants), so that on that day there fell of men and women 12,000, all the people of Ai: for Joshua did not draw back his hand, which had been stretched out with the javelin, till all the inhabitants of Ai were smitten with the ban, *i.e.* put to death; according to the common custom of war, that the general did not lower the war-signal till the conflict was to cease (see *Suidas* in Σημεῖα, and *Lipsius de militia, Rom.* iv. *dial.* 12).—Ver. 27. Only the cattle and the rest of the booty the conquerors retained for themselves, according to the word of the Lord (ver. 2).—Ver. 28. Joshua had the town burnt down and made into a heap of rubbish for ever.—Ver. 29. He had the king of Ai hanged upon a tree, *i.e.* put to death, and then suspended upon a stake (see Num. xxv. 4) until the evening; but at sunset he had him taken down (in accordance with Deut. xxi. 22, 23), and thrown at the entrance of the town-gate, and a heap of stones piled upon him (as in the case of Achan, chap. vii. 26).

Vers. 30–35. Blessings and Curses upon Gerizim and Ebal.—After the capture of Ai, Israel had gained so firm a footing in Canaan that Joshua was able to carry out the instructions of Moses in Deut. xxvii., that, after crossing the Jordan, he was to build an altar upon Mount Ebal for the setting up of the covenant. The fulfilment of these instructions, according to the meaning of this solemn act, as a symbolical setting up of the law of the Lord to be the invariable rule of life to the people of Israel in the land of Canaan (see at Deut. xxvii.), was not only a practical expression of thanksgiving on the part of the covenant nation for its entrance into this land through the almighty assistance of its God, but also a practical acknowledgment, that in the overthrow of the Canaanites thus far it had received a strong pledge of the conquest of the foes that still remained and the capture of the whole of the promised land, provided only it persevered in covenant faithfulness towards the Lord its God. The account of this transaction is attached, it is true, to the conquest of Ai by the introduction, "*Then Joshua built,*" etc. (ver. 30); but simply as an occurrence which had no logical connection with the conquest of Canaan and

the defeat of its kings. The particle וְ (*sequ. imperf.*) is used, for example, in cases where the historian either wishes to introduce contemporaneous facts, that do not carry forward the main course of the history, or loses sight for the time of the strictly historical sequence and simply takes note of the occurrence of some particular event (*vid. Ewald*, § 136, *b.*). The assertion of modern critics, which *Knobel* repeats, that this account is out of place in the series of events as contained in chap. vi.–xii., is so far correct, that the promulgation of the law and the renewal of the covenant upon Ebal form no integral part of the account of the conquest of Canaan; but it by no means proves that this section has been interpolated by the Jehovist from his first document, or by the last editor of this book from some other source, and that what is related here did not take place at the time referred to. The circumstance that, according to chap. vi.–viii. 29, Joshua had only effected the conquest of Jericho in the south of the land from Gilgal as a base, and that even in chap. ix. and x. he was still engaged in the south, by no means involves the impossibility or even the improbability of a march to *Shechem*, which was situated further north, where he had not yet beaten the Canaanites, and had not effected any conquests. The distance from Ai to Shechem between Gerizim and Ebal is about thirty miles in a straight line. *Robinson* made the journey from Bireh (Beeroth) to Sichem on mules in eleven and a half hours, and that not by the most direct route (Pal. iii. pp. 81-2), and Ai was not more than an hour to the south of Beeroth; so that Joshua could have gone with the people from Ai to Gerizim and Ebal in two days without any excessive exertion. Now, even if the conquests of the Israelites had not extended further north than Ai at that time, there was no reason why Joshua should be deterred from advancing further into the land by any fear of attack from the Canaanites, as the people of war who went with him would be able to repulse any hostile attack; and after the news had spread of the fate of Ai and Jericho, no Canaanitish king would be likely to venture upon a conflict with the Israelites alone. Moreover, Shechem had no king, as we may gather from the list of the thirty-one kings who were defeated by Joshua. To the further remark of *Knobel*, that "there was no reason for their hurrying with this ceremony, and it might have been carried out at a later period in undisturbed security," we simply reply, that obedience to the command of God was not a matter of such indifference to the servant of the Lord as *Knobel* imagines. There was no valid reason after the capture of

Ai for postponing any longer the solemn ceremony of setting up the law of Jehovah which had been enjoined by Moses; and if we consider the reason for this solemnity, to which we have already referred, there can be no doubt that Joshua would proceed without the least delay to set up the law of the Lord in Canaan as early as possible, even before the subjugation of the whole land, that he might thereby secure the help of God for further conflicts and enterprises.

The account of this religious solemnity is given very briefly. It presupposes an acquaintance with the Mosaic instructions in Deut. xxvii., and merely gives the leading points, to show that those instructions were carefully carried out by Joshua. Of the three distinct acts of which the ceremony consisted, in the book of Deuteronomy the setting up of the stones with the law written upon them is mentioned first (Deut. xxvii. 2–4), and then (vers. 5–7) the building of the altar and the offering of sacrifice. Here, on the contrary, the building of the altar and offering of sacrifice are mentioned first (vers. 30, 31), and then (ver. 32) the writing of the law upon the stones; which was probably the order actually observed.—In ver. 30 Jehovah is called "*the God of Israel*," to show that henceforth no other god was to be worshipped in Canaan than the God of Israel. On Mount *Ebal*, see at Deut. xi. 29 and xxvii. 4.—Ver. 31. "*As Moses commanded:*" namely, Deut. xxvii. 5. "*As it is written in the book of the law of Moses:*" viz. in Ex. xx. 22 (25). On the presentation of burnt-offerings and slain-offerings, see at Deut. xxvii. 6, 7.—In ver. 32 nothing is mentioned but the writing of the law upon the stones; all the rest is presupposed from Deut. xxvii. 2 sqq., to which the expression "*the* stones" refers. "*Copy of the law:*" as in Deut. xvii. 18; see the explanation at Deut. xxvii. 3. In connection with the third part of the ceremony, the promulgation of the law with the blessing and cursing, the account of the Mosaic instructions given in Deut. xxvii. 11 sqq. is completed in ver. 33 by the statement that "*all Israel, and their elders* (*i.e.* with their elders), *and shoterim, and judges*," stood on both sides of the ark before the Levitical priests, the stranger as well as the native, *i.e.* without any exception, one half (*i.e.* six tribes) towards Mount Ebal, and the other half towards Mount Gerizim. For further remarks, see at Deut. xxvii. 11 sqq. "*As Moses commanded to bless the people before:*" *i.e.* as he had previously commanded. The fact that the thought itself does not suit the context is quite sufficient to show that the explanation given by many commentators, viz. that they were to commence with the

blessings, is incorrect. But if, on the other hand, we connect the word "before" with the principal verb of the sentence, "commanded," the meaning will be that Moses did not give the command to proclaim the blessings and cursings to the people for the first time in connection with these instructions (Deut. xxvii.), but had done so before, at the very outset, namely, as early as Deut. xi. 29. —Ver. 34. "*And afterwards* (after the people had taken the place assigned them) *he read to them all the words of the law*," *i.e.* he had the law proclaimed aloud by the persons entrusted with the proclamation of the law, viz. the Levitical priests. קָרָא, *lit.* to call out or proclaim, then in a derivative sense to read, inasmuch as reading aloud is proclaiming (as, for example, in Ex. xxiv. 7). The words "*the blessing and the curse*" are in apposition to "*all the words of the law*," which they serve to define, and are not to be understood as relating to the blessings in Deut. xxviii. 1–14, and the curses in Deut. xxvii. 15–26 and xxviii. 15–68. The whole law is called "the blessing and the curse" with special reference to its contents, inasmuch as the fulfilment of it brings *eo ipso* a blessing, and the transgression of it *eo ipso* a curse. In the same manner, in Deut. xi. 26, Moses describes the exposition of the whole law in the steppes of Moab as setting before them blessing and cursing. In ver. 35 it is most distinctly stated that Joshua had the whole law read to the people; whilst the expression "all Israel," in ver. 33, is more fully explained as signifying not merely the congregation in its representatives, or even the men of the nation, but "all the congregation of Israel, with the women, and the little ones, and the strangers that were in the midst of it."

Nothing is said about the march of Joshua and all Israel to Gerizim and Ebal. All that we know is, that he not only took with him the people of war and the elders or heads of tribes, but all the people. It follows from this, however, that the whole of the people must have left and completely vacated the camp at Gilgal in the valley of the Jordan. For if all Israel went to the mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, which were situated in the midst of the land, taking even the women and children with them, it is not likely that they left their cattle and other possessions behind them in Gilgal, exposed to the danger of being plundered in the meantime by the Canaanites of the southern mountains. So again we are not informed in what follows (chap. ix. sqq.) in which direction Joshua and the people went after these solemnities at Ebal and Gerizim were over. It is certainly not stated that he went back to Gilgal

in the Jordan valley, and pitched his tent again on the old site. No doubt we find Gilgal still mentioned as the encampment of Israel, not only in chap. ix. 6, x. 6, 9, 15, 43, but even after the defeat and subjugation of the Canaanites in the south and north, when a commencement was made to distribute the land (chap. xiv. 6). But when it is asked whether this Gilgal was the place of encampment on the east of Jericho, which received its name from the circumcision of the whole nation which took place there, or the town of Gilgal by the side of the terebinths of Moreh, which is mentioned in Deut. xi. 30, and by which Moses defines the situation of Gerizim and Ebal, this question cannot be answered unhesitatingly according to the traditional view, viz. in favour of the encampment in the Jordan valley. For when not only the army, but all the people with their wives and children, had once proceeded from the Jordan valley to the mountains of Gerizim and Ebal, we cannot imagine any reason why Joshua should go back again to the plain of Jericho, that is to say, to the extreme corner of Canaan on the east, for the purpose of making that the base of his operations for the conquest and extermination of the Canaanites. And there is just as much improbability in the assumption, that after Joshua had not only defeated the kings of southern Canaan, who had allied themselves with Adonizedek of Jerusalem in the battle fought at Gibeon (chap. x.), but had also overthrown the kings of northern Canaan, who were allied with Jabin of Hazor at the waters of Merom above the Sea of Galilee (chap. xi.), he should return again to Gilgal in the Jordan valley, and there quietly encamp with all the people, and commence the distribution of the land. The only thing that could bring us to assent to such extremely improbable assumptions, would be the fact that there was no other Gilgal in all Canaan than the encampment to the east of Jericho, which received the name of Gilgal for the first time from the Israelites themselves. But as the other Gilgal by the side of the terebinths of Moreh—*i.e.* the present *Jiljilia*, which stands upon an eminence on the south-west of Shiloh at about the same distance from Jerusalem as from Sichem—was a well-known place even in Moses' days (Deut. xi. 30), and from its situation on a lofty ridge, from which you can see the great lowlands and the sea towards the west, the mountains of Gilead towards the east, and far away in the north-east even Hermon itself (*Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 81), was peculiarly well adapted for a place of encampment, from which Joshua could carry on the conquest of the land toward both

the north and south, we can come to no other conclusion than that this Gilgal or Jiljilia was the Gilgal mentioned in chap. ix. 6, x. 6, 9, 15, 43, and xiv. 6, as the place where the Israelites were encamped. We therefore assume, that after the setting up of the law on Gerizim and Ebal, Joshua did not conduct the people with their wives and children back again to the camp which they had left in the Jordan valley on the other side of Jericho, but chose the Gilgal which was situated upon the mountains, and only seven hours' journey to the south of Sichem, as the future place of encampment, and made this the central point of all his further military operations; and that this was the place to which he returned after his last campaign in the north, to commence the division of the conquered land among the tribes of Israel (chap. xiv. 6), and where he remained till the tabernacle was permanently erected at Shiloh, when the further distribution was carried on there (chap. xviii. 1 sqq.). This view, which even *Van de Velde* (Memoir, p. 316) has adopted as probable, is favoured still further by the fact that this Gilgal or Jiljilia, which is still a large village, is frequently mentioned in the subsequent history of Israel, not only in 2 Kings ii. 1 and iv. 38, as the seat of a school of the prophets in the time of Elijah and Elisha, and in Hos. iv. 15, ix. 15, xii. 12, Amos iv. 4, v. 5, as a place which was much frequented for the purpose of idolatrous worship; but even at an earlier date still, namely, as one of the places where Samuel judged the people (1 Sam. vii. 16), and as the place where he offered sacrifice (1 Sam. x. 8; cf. xiii. 7–9), and where he gathered the people together to confirm the monarchy of Saul (1 Sam. xi. 14, 15), at a time when the tabernacle at Shiloh had ceased to be the only national sanctuary of Israel, on account of the ark having been taken away. Gilgal had no doubt acquired this significance along with Bethel, which had been regarded as a holy place ever since the time of Jacob, from the fact that it was there that Joshua had established the camp of Israel with the ark of the covenant, until the land was divided, and Shiloh was appointed as the site for the national sanctuary.

### STRATAGEM OF THE GIBEONITES, AND THEIR CONSEQUENT PRESERVATION.—CHAP. IX.

The victorious advance of the Israelites in the land induced the kings of Canaan to form a common league for the purpose of resisting them. But, as frequently happens, the many kings and

lords of the towns and provinces of Canaan were not all united, so as to make a common and vigorous attack. Before the league had been entered into, the inhabitants of Gibeon, one of the largest towns in the central part of Canaan, together with the smaller neighbouring towns that were dependent upon it, attempted to anticipate the danger which threatened them by means of a stratagem, and to enter into a friendly alliance with the Israelites. And they succeeded, inasmuch as Joshua and the elders of the congregation of Israel fell into the snare that was laid for them by the ambassadors of the Gibeonites, who came to the camp at Gilgal, and made the desired treaty with them, without inquiring of the Lord. "This account," as *O. v. Gerlach* says, "is a warning to the Church of God of all ages against the cunning and dissimulation of the world, which often seeks for a peaceable recognition on the part of the kingdom of God, and even for a reception into it, whenever it may be its advantage to do so."

Vers. 1, 2, form the introduction to chaps. ix.–xi., and correspond to the introduction in chap. v. 1. The news of the miraculous passage of the Israelites through the Jordan had thrown all the kings of Canaan into such despair, that they did not venture to make any attack upon Israel. But they gradually recovered from their first panic, partly, no doubt, in consequence of the failure of the first attack of the Israelites upon Ai, and resolved to join together in making war upon the foreign invaders. The kings of Canaan did this when they heard, *sc.* what Israel had hitherto undertaken and accomplished, not merely "what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai" (*Knobel*): that is to say, all the kings across the Jordan, *i.e.* in the country to the west of the Jordan (עֵבֶר הַיַּרְדֵּן, as in chap. v. 1), viz. "*upon the mountains*" (not only the mountains of Judah, as in chap. x. 40, xi. 16, etc., but all the mountains which run throughout the whole length of Canaan, as in Deut. i. 7 and Num. xiii. 17: see the explanation of the latter passage); "*in the lowlands*" (*shephelah*, the low-lying country between the mountains and the sea-coast, which is simply intersected by small ranges of hills; see at Deut. i. 7); "*and on all the coast of the Great Sea towards Lebanon*," *i.e.* the narrow coast of the Mediterranean Sea from Joppa up to the Ladder of Tyre (see at Deut. i. 7). The different tribes of the Canaanites are also mentioned by name, as in chap. iii. 10, except that the Girgashites are omitted. These gathered themselves together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one mouth, or with one accord (1 Kings xxii. 13).

Vers. 3–5. But the inhabitants of a republic, which included not only Gibeon the capital, but the towns of Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim also, acted differently from the rest. *Gibeon* (*Γαβάων, Gabaon*, LXX. *Vulg.*) was larger than Ai, being one of the royal cities (chap. x. 2), and was inhabited by Hivites, who were a brave people (chap. x. 7, xi. 19). It was afterwards allotted to the tribe of Benjamin, and set apart as a Levitical town (chap. xviii. 25, xxi. 17). After the destruction of Nob by Saul, the tabernacle was removed thither, and there it remained till the building of Solomon's temple (1 Chron. xvi. 39, xxi. 29; 1 Kings iii. 4, 5; 2 Chron. i. 3 sqq.). According to *Josephus*, it was forty or fifty stadia from Jerusalem, and judging from its name was built upon a hill. It is to be found in the modern *Jib*, two good hours' journey to the north-west of Jerusalem, a village of moderate size, on a long chalk hill which overlooks a very fertile, well cultivated plain, or rather a basin, consisting of broad valleys and plains, and rises like a vineyard, in the form of separate terraces (*Strauss*, Sinai, p. 332). The remains of large massive buildings of great antiquity are still to be seen there, also some fountains, and two large subterraneous reservoirs (*vid. Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 136). When the Gibeonites heard of the fate of Jericho and Ai, they also did (something) with stratagem. In the expression גַּם הֵמָּה ("*they also*") there is a reference implied to what Joshua had done at Jericho and Ai; not, however, to the stratagem resorted to in the case of Ai, as such an allusion would not apply to Jericho. *They set out as ambassadors:* יִצְטָרוּ, from צִיר, which occurs in every other instance in the form of a noun, signifying a messenger (Prov. xiii. 17, etc.). In the *Hithpael* it means to make themselves ambassadors, to travel as ambassadors. The translators of the ancient versions, however, adopted the reading יִצְטַיָּדוּ, they provided themselves with food; but this was nothing more than a conjecture founded upon ver. 12, and without the slightest critical value. They also took "*old sacks upon their asses, and old mended wine-skins.*" מְצֹרָרִים, from צָרַר, *lit.* bound together, is very characteristic. There are two modes adopted in the East of repairing skins when torn, viz. inserting a patch, or tying up the piece that is torn in the form of a bag. Here the reference is to the latter, which was most in harmony with their statement, that the skins had got injured upon their long journey. Also "*old mended sandals upon their feet, and old clothes upon them* (upon their bodies); *and all the bread of their provisions had become dry and quite mouldy.*" נִקְדִים, *lit.*

furnished with points; נָקוֹד, pointed, speckled (Gen. xxx. 32 sqq.). Hence the rendering of the LXX., *ἐυρωτιῶν*; *Theod.*, *βεβρωμένοι*; *Luther schimmlicht*, mouldy; whereas the rendering adopted by *Aquila* is *ἐψαθυρωμένος*; by *Symmachus*, *κάπορος*, *i.e. adustus, torridus*; and by the *Vulgate*, *in frusta comminuti*, *i.e.* crumbled.

Vers. 6-15. Having made these preparations, they went to the Israelitish camp at Gilgal (Jiljilia), introduced themselves to the men of Israel (אִישׁ, in a collective sense, the plural being but little used, and only occurring in Prov. viii. 4, Isa. liii. 3, and Ps. cxli. 4) as having come from a distant land, and asked them to make a league with them. But the Israelites hesitated, and said to the Hivites, *i.e.* the Gibeonites who were Hivites, that they might perhaps be living in the midst of them (the Israelites), *i.e.* in the land of Canaan, which the Israelites already looked upon as their own; and if so, how could they make a league with them? This hesitation on their part was founded upon the express command of God, that they were not to make any league with the tribes of Canaan (Ex. xxiii. 32, xxxiv. 12; Num. xxxiii. 55; Deut. vii. 2, etc.). In reply to this the Gibeonites simply said, "*We are thy servants*" (ver. 8), *i.e.* we are at thy service, which, according to the obsequious language common in the East, was nothing more than a phrase intended to secure the favour of Joshua, and by no means implied a readiness on their part to submit to the Israelites and pay them tribute, as *Rosenmüller*, *Knobel*, and others suppose; for, as *Grotius* correctly observes, what they wished for was "a friendly alliance, by which both their territory and also full liberty would be secured to themselves." The *Keri* וַיֹּאמֶר (ver. 7) is nothing more than a critical conjecture, occasioned not so much by the singular אִישׁ, which is frequently construed in the historical writings as a collective noun with a plural verb, as by the singular suffix attached to בְּקִרְבֵּנוּ, which is to be explained on the ground that only one of the Israelites (viz. Joshua) was speaking as the mouthpiece of all the rest. The plural וַיֹּאמְרוּ is used, because Joshua spoke in the name of the people.—Ver. 8. To the further question put by Joshua, where they had come from, the Gibeonites replied, "*From a very distant land have thy servants come, because of the name of Jehovah thy God*," or as they themselves proceed at once to explain: "*for we have heard the fame (fama) of Him, and all that He did in Egypt, and to Sihon and Og, the two kings of the Amorites.*" They very wisely say nothing about the miracles connected with the crossing of the Jordan and the taking of Jericho, since, "as the inhabit-

ants of a very far distant region, they could not have heard anything about things that had occurred so lately, even by report" (*Masius*).—Vers. 11 sqq. When these tidings reached them, they were sent off by the elders (the leaders of the republic) and the inhabitants of the land to meet the Israelites, that they might offer them their service, and form an alliance with them. In confirmation of this, they point to their dried provisions, and their torn and mended skins and clothes.—Vers. 14, 15. The Israelites suffered themselves to be taken in by this pretence. "*The men* (the elders of Israel) *took of their provisions; but they did not ask the mouth of the Lord.*" Instead of inquiring the will of the Lord in this matter through the Urim and Thummim of the high priest (Num. xxvii. 21), they contented themselves with taking some of the bread that was shown them, and tasting it; as if the dry mouldy bread furnished a safe guarantee of the truth of the words of these foreign ambassadors. Some commentators regard their taking of their provisions as a sign of mutual friendship, or of the league which they made; but in that case their eating with them would at any rate have been mentioned. Among the Arabs, simply eating bread and salt with a guest is considered a sign of peace and friendship.—Ver. 15. So Joshua made (granted) them peace (*vid.* Isa. xxvii. 5), and concluded a covenant with them (לָהֶם, in their favour), to let them live; and the princes of the congregation sware unto them. Letting them live is the only article of the league that is mentioned, both because this was the main point, and also with special reference to the fact that the Gibeonites, being Canaanites, ought properly to have been destroyed. It is true that Joshua and the princes of the congregation had not violated any express command of God by doing this; for the only thing prohibited in the law was making treaties with the *Canaanites*, which they did not suppose the Gibeonites to be, whilst in Deut. xx. 11, where wars with foreign nations (not Canaanites) are referred to, permission is given to make peace with them, so that all treaties with foreign nations are not forbidden. But they had failed in this respect, that, trusting to the crafty words of the Gibeonites, and to outward appearances only, they had forgotten their attitude to the Lord their God, who had promised to His congregation, in all important matters, a direct revelation of His own will.

Vers. 16–27. Three days after the treaty had been concluded, the Israelites discovered that they had been deceived, and that their allies dwelt among them (see ver. 7). They set out therefore

to deal with the deceivers, and reached their towns Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath-jearim on the third day. *Chephirah*, which was afterwards allotted to the tribe of Benjamin along with Gibeon and Beeroth, and was still inhabited after the captivity (chap. xviii. 25, 26; Ezra ii. 25; Neh. vii. 29), is to be seen in the ruins of *Kefir*, an hour's journey to the east of Yalo, in the mountains, and three hours to the west of Gibeon (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 146, and *Van de Velde*, Memoir, pp. 303–4). *Beeroth*, *Βηρώθ*, according to *Eusebius* (*Onom. s. v.*) a hamlet near Jerusalem, and seven miles on the road to *Nicopolis* (it should read *Neapolis*), was in the tribe of Benjamin (2 Sam. iv. 2), and still exists in the large village of *Bireh*, which is situated upon a mountain nine Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem in a stony and barren district, and has still several springs and a good well, besides the remains of a fine old church of the time of the Crusades (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 130 sqq.; *Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 195–6). *Kirjath-jearim*, also called *Kirjath-baal* (chap. xv. 60), *Baalah* (chap. xv. 9), and *Baal-Jehuda* (2 Sam. vi. 2), was allotted to the tribe of Judah. It stood upon the boundary between Judah and Benjamin (chap. xv. 60, xviii. 15); and the ark remained there, after it had been sent back by the Philistines, until the time of David (1 Sam. vii. 2; 2 Sam. vi. 2; 1 Chron. xiii. 5, 6). According to the *Onom.*, *s. v.* *Καριαθιαρείμ* and *Βαάλ*, it was nine or ten Roman miles from Jerusalem, on the road to Diospolis (Lydda), and is probably to be seen in the present *Kuryet el Enab*, a considerable village with a large number of olive trees, figs, pomegranates, and vineyards, from the last of which the old "town of the forests" has received the more modern name of "town of the vine" (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 335, and Bibl. Res. pp. 156–7; and *Seetzen*, ii. p. 65). These towns, which formed one republic with Gibeon, and were governed by elders, were at so short a distance from Gilgal (Jiljilia), that the Israelites could reach it in one or two days. The expression "*on the third day*" is not at variance with this; for it is not stated that Israel took three days to march there, but simply that they arrived there on the third day after receiving the intelligence of the arrival of the ambassadors.—Ver. 18. "*The Israelites smote them not*," *sc.* with the edge of the sword, "*because the princes of the congregation had sworn to them*," *sc.* to let them live (ver. 15); but, notwithstanding the murmuring of the congregation, they declared that they might not touch them because of their oath. "*This* (*sc.* what we have sworn) *we will do to them, and let them live* (הַחֲיֹת, *inf.*

*abs.* with special emphasis instead of the finite verb), *lest wrath come upon us because of the oath.*" *Wrath* (*sc.* of God), a judgment such as fell upon Israel in the time of David, because Saul disregarded this oath and sought to destroy the Gibeonites (2 Sam. xxi. 1 sqq.).

But how could the elders of Israel consider themselves bound by their oath to grant to the Gibeonites the preservation of life which had been secured to them by the treaty they had made, when the very supposition upon which the treaty was made, viz. that the Gibeonites did not belong to the tribes of Canaan, was proved to be false, and the Gibeonites had studiously deceived them by pretending that they had come from a very distant land? As they had been absolutely forbidden to make any treaties with the Canaanites, it might be supposed that, after the discovery of the deception which had been practised upon them, the Israelitish rulers would be under no obligation to observe the treaty which they had made with the Gibeonites in full faith in the truth of their word. And no doubt from the stand-point of strict justice this view appears to be a right one. But the princes of Israel shrank back from breaking the oath which, as is emphatically stated in ver. 19, they had sworn by Jehovah the God of Israel, not because they assumed, as *Hauff* supposes, "that an oath simply regarded as an outward and holy transaction had an absolutely binding force," but because they were afraid of bringing the name of the God of Israel into contempt among the Canaanites, which they would have done if they had broken the oath which they had sworn by this God, and had destroyed the Gibeonites. They were bound to observe the oath which they had once sworn, if only to prevent the sincerity of the God by whom they had sworn from being rendered doubtful in the eyes of the Gibeonites; but they were not justified in taking the oath. They had done this without asking the mouth of Jehovah (ver. 14), and thus had sinned against the Lord their God. But they could not repair this fault by breaking the oath which they had thus imprudently taken, *i.e.* by committing a fresh sin; for the violation of an oath is always sin, even when the oath has been taken inconsiderately, and it is afterwards discovered that what was sworn to was not in accordance with the will of God, and that an observance of the oath will certainly be hurtful (*vid.* Ps. xv. 4).[1] By taking an oath to the ambassadors that they

[1] "The binding power of an oath ought to be held so sacred among us, that we should not swerve from our bond under any pretence of error, even though we had been deceived: since the sacred name of God is of greater worth than all the riches of the world. Even though a person should have sworn therefore

would let the Gibeonites live, the princes of Israel had acted unconsciously in violation of the command of God that they were to destroy the Canaanites. As soon therefore as they discovered their error or their oversight, they were bound to do all in their power to ward off from the congregation the danger which might arise of their being drawn away to idolatry—the very thing which the Lord had intended to avert by giving that command. If this could by any possibility be done without violating their oath, they were bound to do it for the sake of the name of the Lord by which they swore; that is to say, while letting the Gibeonites live, it was their duty to put them in such a position, that they could not possibly seduce the Israelites to idolatry. And this the princes of Israel proposed to do, by granting to the Gibeonites on the one hand the preservation of their lives according to the oath they had taken, and on the other hand by making them slaves of the sanctuary. That they acted rightly in this respect, is evident from the fact that their conduct is never blamed either by the historian or by the history, inasmuch as it is not stated anywhere that the Gibeonites, after being made into temple slaves, held out any inducement to the Israelites to join in idolatrous worship, and still more from the fact, that at a future period God himself reckoned the attempt of Saul to destroy the Gibeonites, in his false zeal for the children of Israel, as an act of blood-guiltiness on the part of the nation of Israel for which expiation must be made (2 Sam. xxi. 1 sqq.), and consequently approved of the observance of the oath which had been sworn to them, though without thereby sanctioning the treaty itself. —Ver. 21. The princes declared again most emphatically, "*They shall live.*" Thus the Gibeonites became hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation, as the princes had said to them, *i.e.* had resolved concerning them. This resolution they communicated to the congregation at the time, using the expression יִחְיוּ (*let them live*); but the historian has passed this over at ver. 21*a*, and instead of mentioning the resolution proceeds at once to describe its execution.—Vers. 22, 23. Joshua then summoned the Gibeonites, charged them with their deceit, and pronounced upon them the curse of

without sufficient consideration, no injury or loss will release him from his oath." This is the opinion expressed by *Calvin* with reference to Ps. xv. 4; yet for all that he regards the observance of their oath on the part of the princes of Israel as a sin, because he limits this golden rule in the most arbitrary manner to private affairs alone, and therefore concludes that the Israelites were not bound to observe this "wily treaty."

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eternal servitude: "*There shall not be cut off from you a servant,*" *i.e.* ye shall never cease to be servants, ye shall remain servants for ever (*vid.* 2 Sam. iii. 29; 1 Kings ii. 4), "*and that as hewers of wood and drawers of waters for our God's house.*" This is a fuller definition of the expression "for all the congregation" in ver. 21. The Gibeonites were to perform for the congregation the slaves' labour of hewing wood and drawing water for the worship of the sanctuary, —a duty which was performed, according to Deut. xxix. 10, by the lowest classes of the people. In this way the curse of Noah upon Canaan (Gen. ix. 25) was literally fulfilled upon the Hivites of the Gibeonitish republic.—Vers. 24, 25. The Gibeonites offered this excuse for their conduct, that having heard of the command of God which had been issued through Moses, that all the Canaanites were to be destroyed (Deut. vii. 1, xx. 16, 17), they had feared greatly for their lives, and readily submitted to the resolution which Joshua made known to them.—Vers. 26, 27. "*And so did he unto them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, that they slew them not. He made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and indeed for the altar of the Lord,*" (assigning them) "*to the place which God would choose,*" viz. for the altar. אֶל־הַמָּקוֹם (to the place) is grammatically dependent upon וַיִּתְּנֵם (he "gave them"). It by no means follows, however, that Joshua sent them there at that very time, but simply that he sentenced them to service at the altar in the place which would be chosen for the sanctuary. From the words "*unto this day,*" it no doubt follows, on the one hand, that the account was written after the fact had taken place; but, on the other hand, it also follows from the future יִבְחַר (should, or shall choose), that it was written before the place was definitely fixed, and therefore before the building of Solomon's temple.

### VICTORY AT GIBEON, AND CONQUEST OF SOUTHERN CANAAN.—CHAP. X.

Vers. 1–5. The report that Joshua had taken Ai, and put it, like Jericho, under the ban, and that the Gibeonites had concluded a treaty with Israel, filled Adonizedek the king of Jerusalem with alarm, as Gibeon was a large town, like one of the king's towns, even larger than Ai, and its inhabitants were brave men. He therefore joined with the kings of Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, to make a common attack upon Gibeon, and punish it for

its alliance with the Israelites, and at the same time to put a check upon the further conquests of Israel. *Adonizedek*, *i.e.* lord of righteousness, is synonymous with *Melchizedek* (king of righteousness), and was a title of the Jebusite kings, as Pharaoh was of the Egyptian. *Jerusalem*, *i.e.* the founding or possession of peace, called *Salem* in the time of Abraham (Gen. xiv. 18), was the proper name of the town, which was also frequently called by the name of its Canaanitish inhabitants *Jebus* (Judg. xix. 10, 11; 1 Chron. xi. 4), or "city of the Jebusites" (*Ir-Jebusi*, Judg. xix. 11), sometimes also in a contracted form, *Jebusi* (יְבוּסִי, chap. xviii. 16, 28, xv. 8; 2 Sam. v. 8).[1] On the division of the land it was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 28); but being situated upon the border of Judah (chap. xv. 8), it was conquered, and burned by the sons of Judah after the death of Joshua (Judg. i. 8). It was very soon taken again and rebuilt by the Jebusites, whom the sons of Judah were unable to destroy (Judg. xv. 63, xix. 12), so that both Benjaminites and Judahites lived there along with the Jebusites (Judg. i. 21, xv. 63); and the upper town especially, upon the summit of Mount Zion, remained as a fortification in the possession of the Jebusites, until David conquered it (2 Sam. v. 6 sqq.), made it the capital of his kingdom, and called it by his own name, "the city of David," after which the old name of Jebus fell into disuse. *Hebron*, the town of *Arba* the Anakite (chap. xiv. 15, etc.; see at Gen. xxiii. 2), was twenty-two Roman miles south of Jerusalem, in a deep and narrow valley upon the mountains of Judah, a town of the greatest antiquity (Num. xiii. 22), now called *el Khalil*, *i.e.* the friend (of God), with reference to Abraham's sojourn there. The ruins of an ancient heathen temple are still to be seen there, as well as the Haram, built of colossal blocks, which contains, according to Mohammedan tradition, the burial-place of the patriarchs (see at Gen. xxiii. 17). *Jarmuth*, in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 35; Neh. xi. 29), according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Jermus*) a hamlet, *Jermucha* (Ἱερμοχῶς), ten Roman miles from Eleutheropolis, on the road to Jerusalem, is the modern *Jarmuk*, a village on a lofty hill, with the remains of walls and cisterns of a very ancient date, the name of which, according to *Van de Velde* (Mem. pp. 115–6), is pronounced *Tell 'Armuth* by the Arabs (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 344). *Lachish*, in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 39), was fortified

[1] In our English version, we have the Hebrew word itself simply transposed in Joshua xviii. 16, 28; whilst it is rendered "the Jebusite" in chap. xv. 8, and "the Jebusites" in 2 Sam. v. 8.—Tr.

by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 9), and besieged by Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xviii. 14, xix. 8; Jer. xxxiv. 7), and was still inhabited by Jews after the return from the captivity (Neh. xi. 30). It is probably to be found in *Um Lakis*, an old place upon a low round hill, covered with heaps of small round stones thrown together in great confusion, containing relics of marble columns; it is about an hour and a quarter to the west of Ajlun, and seven hours to the west of Eleutheropolis.[1] *Eglon:* also in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 39). The present name is *Ajlân*, a heap of ruins, about three-quarters of an hour to the east of Um Lakis (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 392, and *Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 308). In the *Onom.* (*s. v. Eglon*) it is erroneously identified with *Odollam;* whereas the situation of *Agla*, "at the tenth stone, as you go from Eleutheropolis to Gaza" (*Onom. s. v. Βηθαλαάμ, Bethagla*), suits *Eglon* exactly.—Ver. 5. These five kings marched against Gibeon and besieged the town. The king of Jerusalem headed the expedition, as his town was so near to Gibeon that he was the first to fear an attack from the Israelites.

Vers. 6–11. The Gibeonites then sent to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal, and entreated him to come to his help as speedily as possible. "*Slack not thy hand from thy servants,*" *i.e.* withhold not thy help from us. The definition appended to "the kings of the Amorites" ("*that dwelt in the mountains*") is to be understood *a potiori*, and does not warrant us in drawing the conclusion, that all the towns mentioned in ver. 3 were in the mountains of Judah. The Amorites who dwelt in the mountains were the strongest of all the Canaanites.—Ver. 7. In accordance with this petition Joshua advanced from Gilgal (יַעַל, not went up) with all the people of war, even (*vav. expl.*) all the men of valour.—Ver. 8. The Lord then renewed the assurance of His help in this particular war, in which Joshua was about to fight for the first time with several allied kings of Canaan (cf. chap. ii. 24, vi. 2, viii. 1, 18).—Ver. 9. Joshua came

[1] It is true that *Robinson* disputes the identity of *Um Lakis* with the ancient *Lachish* (Pal. ii. p. 388), but "not on any reasonable ground" (*Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 320). The statement in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Lochis*), that it was seven Roman miles to the south of Eleutheropolis, cannot prove much, as it may easily contain an error in the number, and *Robinson* does not admit its authority even in the case of Eglon (Pal. ii. p. 392). Still less can *Knobel's* conjecture be correct, that it is to be found in the old place called *Sukkarijeh*, two hours and a half to the south-west of Beit Jibrin (Eleutheropolis), as *Sukkarijeh* is on the east of Ajlun, whereas, according to vers. 31–36, Lachish is to be sought for on the west of Eglon.

suddenly upon them (the enemy), as he had marched the whole night from Gilgal, *i.e.* had accomplished the entire distance in a night. Jiljilia is fully fifteen miles from el-Jib.—Ver. 10. "*Jehovah threw them into confusion*," as He had promised in Ex. xxiii. 27, and in all probability, judging from ver. 11, by dreadful thunder and lightning (*vid.* 1 Sam. vii. 10; Ps. xviii. 15, cxliv. 6: it is different in Ex. xiv. 24). "*Israel smote them in a great slaughter at Gibeon, and pursued them by the way of the ascent of Bethhoron*," *i.e.* Upper Bethhoron (*Beit Ur, el-Foka*), which was nearest to Gibeon, only four hours distant on the north-west, on a lofty promontory between two valleys, one on the north, the other on the south, and was separated from Lower Bethhoron, which lies further west, by a long steep pass, from which the ascent to Upper Bethhoron is very steep and rocky, though the rock has been cut away in many places now, and a path made by means of steps (see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 59). This pass between the two places leads downwards from Gibeon towards the western plain, and was called sometimes the ascent, or going up to Bethhoron, and sometimes the descent, or going down from it (ver. 11), *ἀνάβασις καὶ κατάβασις Βαιθωρῶν* (1 Macc. iii. 16, 24). Israel smote the enemy still further, "*to Azekah and Makkedah:*" so far were they pursued and beaten after the battle (cf. vers. 16, 21). If we compare ver. 11, according to which the enemy was smitten, from Bethhoron to Azekah, by a violent fall of hail, it is very evident that the two places were on the west of Bethhoron. And it is in perfect harmony with this that we find both places described as being in the lowland; Azekah in the hill-country between the mountains and the plain (chap. xv. 35), Makkedah in the plain itself (chap. xv. 41). *Azekah*, which was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 9), besieged by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xxxiv. 7), and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 30), was not far from Socoh, according to chap. xv. 35; whilst sideways between the two was *Ephes-dammim* (1 Sam. xvii. 1). *Van de Velde* has discovered the latter in the ruins of *Damûm*, about an hour's journey east by south from Beit Nettif (Mem. p. 290), and consequently imagines that *Azekah* is to be found in the village of *Ahbek*, which stands upon a lofty mountain-top a mile and a half to the north of Damûm, and about four or five miles N.N.E. of Shuweikeh, supposing this to be *Aphek*. The statement in the *Onom.* (*s. v.* *Ἀζηκά*), *ἀνάμεσον Ἐλευθεροπόλεως καὶ Αἰλίας*, agrees with this. *Makkedah* is described in the *Onom.* as being eight Roman miles to the east of Eleutheropolis, and hence *Knobel* supposes it to have

been near *Terkumieh*, or *Morak;* but he is wrong in his supposition, as in that case it would have been in the hill-country or upon the mountains, whereas it was one of the towns in the plain (chap. xv. 41). *Van de Velde's* conjecture (p. 332) is a much more probable one, viz. that it is to be found in *Summeil*, a considerable village on an eminence in the plain, with a large public well 110 feet deep and 11 feet in diameter, with strongly built walls of hewn stones, where there is also part of an old wall, which to all appearance must formerly have belonged to a large square castle built of uncemented stones, resembling in some respects the oldest foundation wall of Beit Jibrin (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 368). It is two hours and a half to the north-west of Beit Jibrin, and there *Van de Velde* discovered the large cave (see at ver. 16), which *Robinson* has not observed (see his Journey through Syria and Palestine).—Ver. 11. The large stones which the Lord threw upon the flying foe at the slope of Bethhoron were hail-stones (see Isa. xxx. 30), not stone-hail, or a shower of stones, but a terrible hail-storm, in which hail fell upon the foe in pieces as large as stones (see Wisd. xlvi. 6), and slew a greater number of them than the swords of the Israelites. This phenomenon, which resembled the terrible hail in Egypt (Ex. ix. 24), was manifestly a miraculous occurrence produced by the omnipotent power of God, inasmuch as the hail-stones slew the enemy without injuring the Israelites, who were pursuing them. By this the Israelites were to be made to see that it was not their own power, but the supernatural help of their God, which had given them the victory; whilst the enemy discovered that it was not only the people of Israel, but the God of Israel, that had devoted them to destruction.

Vers. 12–15. In firm reliance upon the promise of God (ver. 8), Joshua offered a prayer to the Lord during the battle, that He would not let the sun go down till Israel had taken vengeance upon their foes; and the Lord hearkened to the prayer of His servant, and the sun hastened not to go down till the defeat of the Amorites was accomplished. This miraculous victory was celebrated by the Israelites in a war-song, which was preserved in the "*book of the Righteous.*" The author of the book of Joshua has introduced the passage out of this book which celebrates the mighty act of the Lord for the glorification of His name upon Israel, and their foes the Amorites. It is generally admitted, that vers. 12–15 contain a quotation from the "book of Jasher," mentioned in ver. 13. This quotation, and the reference to the work itself, are analogous to the

notice of "the book of the wars of the Lord," in Num. xxi. 14, and to the strophes of a song which are there interwoven with the historical narrative; the object being, not to confirm the historical account by referring to an earlier source, but simply to set forth before other generations the powerful impression which was made upon the congregation by these mighty acts of the Lord. The "*book of Jasher*," *i.e.* book of the upright, or righteous man, that is to say, of the true members of the theocracy, or godly men. יָשָׁר (*Jasher*, the righteous) is used to denote the genuine Israelite, in the same sense as in Num. xxiii. 10, where Balaam calls the Israelites "the righteous," inasmuch as Jehovah, the righteous and upright one (Deut. xxxii. 4), had called them to be His people, and to walk in His righteousness. In addition to this passage, the "book of the righteous (*Jasher*)" is also mentioned in 2 Sam. i. 18, as a work in which was to be found David's elegy upon Saul and Jonathan. From this fact it has been justly inferred, that the book was a collection of odes in praise of certain heroes of the theocracy, with historical notices of their achievements interwoven, and that the collection was formed by degrees; so that the reference to this work is neither a proof that the passage has been interpolated by a *later* hand, nor that the work was composed at a very late period. That the passage quoted from this work is extracted from a song, is evident enough, both from the poetical form of the composition, and also from the parallelism of the sentences. The quotation, however, does not begin with וַיֹּאמֶר (*and he said*) in ver. 12*b*, but with בְּיוֹם תֵּת (*in the day when the Lord delivered*) in ver. 12*a*, and vers. 13 and 14 also form part of it; so that the title of the book from which the quotation is taken is inserted in the middle of the quotation itself. In other cases, unquestionably, such formulas of quotation are placed either at the beginning (as in Num. xxi. 14, 27; 2 Sam. i. 18), or else at the close of the account, which is frequently the case in the books of Kings and Chronicles; but it by no means follows that there were no exceptions to this rule, especially as the reason for mentioning the original sources is a totally different one in the books of Kings, where the works cited are not the simple vouchers for the facts related, but works containing fuller and more elaborate accounts of events which have only been cursorily described. The poetical form of the passage in ver. 13 also leaves no doubt whatever that vers. 13 and 14 contain the words of the old poet, and are not a prose comment made by the historian upon the poetical passage quoted. The only purely his-

torical statement is ver. 15; and this is repeated in ver. 43, at the close of the account of the wars and the victory. But this literal repetition of ver. 15 in ver. 43, and the fact that the statement, that Joshua returned with all the people to the camp at Gilgal, anticipates the historical course of the events in a very remarkable manner, render it highly probable, if not absolutely certain, that ver. 15 was also taken from the book of the righteous.

In the day when Jehovah delivered up the Amorites to the children of Israel ("before," as in Deut. ii. 31, 33, etc.), Joshua said before the eyes (*i.e.* in the presence) of Israel, so that the Israelites were witnesses of his words (*vid.* Deut. xxxi. 7): "*Sun, stand still* (wait) *at Gibeon; and, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon.*" דָּמַם, to be silent, to keep one's self quiet or still, to wait (1 Sam. xiv. 9). The address to the sun and moon implies that they both of them stood, or were visible in the heavens at the time; and inasmuch as it was spoken to the Lord, involves a prayer that the Lord and Creator of the world would not suffer the sun and moon to set till Israel had taken vengeance upon its foes. This explanation of the prayer is only to be found, it is true, in the statement that the sun and moon stood still at Joshua's word; but we must imagine it as included in the prayer itself. גּוֹי without an article, when used to denote the people of Israel, is to be regarded as a poetical expression. In the sequel (ver. 13*b*) the sun only is spoken of: "*and the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.*" The poetical word אוּץ, to press or hurry, is founded upon the idea that the sun runs its course like a strong man, with vigour, and without weariness or cessation (Ps. xix. 6, 7). It follows from this, that Joshua merely prayed for the day to be lengthened, *i.e.* for the setting of the sun to be delayed; and that he included the moon (ver. 12), simply because it was visible at the time. But even if this is the case, we are not therefore to conclude, as *C. v. Lapide, Clericus*, and others have done, that Joshua spoke these words in the afternoon, when the sun was beginning to set, and the moon had already risen. The expression בַּחֲצִי הַשָּׁמַיִם, "*in the half*," *i.e.* the midst, "*of the sky*," is opposed to this view, and still more the relative position of the two in the sky, the sun at Gibeon and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, *i.e.* in the fine broad basin on the north side of *Yalo* (see at chap. xix. 42), the present *Merj Ibn Omeir* (*Rob.* iii. pp. 63, 64), which is four hours' journey to the west of Gibeon. As Joshua smote the enemy at Gibeon, and they fled to the south-west, he was no doubt on the west of

Gibeon when he commanded the sun and moon to stand still; and therefore from his point of view the sun would be in the east when it stood over Gibeon, and the moon in the far west when it stood over the valley of Ajalon. But that could only be the case before noon, a few hours after sunrise, when the moon had not yet set in the western sky. In all probability the battle took place quite early in the morning, as Joshua had marched from Gilgal the night before, and fell quite suddenly upon the enemy (ver. 9). But after the conflict had lasted for some hours, and Joshua began to be anxious lest he should be unable to overcome the enemy before night came on, he addressed the prayer to the Lord to lengthen out the day, and in a short time saw his prayer so far fulfilled, that the sun still stood high up in the sky when the enemy was put to flight. We take for granted that these words were spoken by Joshua before the terrible hail-storm which fell upon the enemy in their flight, when they were near Bethhoron, which is about two hours from Gibeon, and smote them to Azekah. There is nothing to prevent our assuming this. The fact, that in the historical account the hail is mentioned before the desire expressed by Joshua and the fulfilment of that desire, may be explained on the simple ground, that the historian, following the order of importance, relates the principal incident in connection with the battle first, before proceeding to the special point to be cited from the book of the righteous. כְּיוֹם תָּמִים, "*towards* (about, or as it were) *a whole day*," neither signifies "when the day was ended" (*Clericus*), nor "as it usually does when the day is perfected or absolutely finished" (*Rosenmüller*); but the sun did not hasten or press to go down, delayed its setting, almost a whole day ("*day*" being the time between sunrise and sunset).

What conception are we to form of this miraculous event? It is not stated that the sun actually stood still in one spot in the heavens,—say, for instance, in the zenith. And if the expression, "the sun stood still in the midst of heaven," which is added as an explanation of וַיִּדֹּם, is so pressed as to mean that the sun was miraculously stopped in its course, this is hardly reconcilable with לֹא אָץ לָבוֹא, "it hasted not to go down," as these words, if taken literally, merely denote a slower motion on the part of the sun, as many of the Rabbins have observed. All that is clearly affirmed in vers. 12 and 13 is, that at Joshua's word the sun remained standing in the sky for almost a whole day longer. To this there is added, in ver. 14, "*There was no day like that before it, or after it, that*

*Jehovah hearkened to the voice of a man; for Jehovah fought for Israel.*" This expression must not be pressed too far, as the analogous passages ("there was none like him," etc.) in 2 Kings xviii. 5 and xxiii. 25 clearly show. They merely express this thought: no other day like this, which God so miraculously lengthened, ever occurred either before or afterwards. So much, therefore, is obvious enough from the words, that the writer of the old song, and also the author of the book of Joshua, who inserted the passage in his narrative, were convinced that the day was miraculously prolonged. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that it is not stated that God lengthened that day at the request of Joshua almost an entire day, or that He made the sun stand still almost a whole day, but simply that God hearkened to the voice of Joshua, *i.e.* did not permit the sun to go down till Israel had avenged itself upon its enemies. This distinction is not without importance: for a miraculous prolongation of the day would take place not only if the sun's course or sun's setting was delayed for several hours by the omnipotent power of God, and the day extended from twelve to eighteen or twenty hours, but also if the day seemed to Joshua and all Israel to be miraculously prolonged; because the work accomplished on that day was so great, that it would have required almost two days to accomplish it without supernatural aid. It is not easy to decide between these two opposite views; in fact, it is quite impossible if we go to the root of the matter. When we are not in circumstances to measure the length of the day by the clock, it is very easy to mistake its actual length, especially in the midst of the pressure of business or work. The Israelites at that time had neither sun-clocks nor any other kind of clock; and during the confusion of the battle it is hardly likely that Joshua, or any one else who was engaged in the conflict, would watch the shadow of the sun and its changes, either by a tree or any other object, so as to discover that the sun had actually stood still, from the fact that for hours the shadow had neither moved nor altered in length. Under such circumstances, therefore, it was quite impossible for the Israelites to decide whether it was in reality, or only in their own imagination, that the day was longer than others. To this there must be added the poetical character of the verses before us. When David celebrates the miraculous deliverance which he had received from the Lord, in these words, "In my distress I called upon the Lord. . . . He heard my voice out of His temple. . . . He bowed the heavens also, and came down. . . . He sent from above, He took

me, He drew me out of many waters" (Ps. xviii. 7–17), who would ever think of interpreting the words literally, and supposing them to mean that God actually came down from the sky, and stretched out His hand to draw David out of the water? Or who would understand the words of Deborah, "They fought from heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera" (Judg. v. 20), in their literal sense? The truthfulness of such utterances is to be sought for in the subjective sphere of religious intuition, and not in a literal interpretation of the words. And it may be just the same with these verses, without their actual contents being affected, if the day was merely *subjectively* lengthened,—that is to say, in the religious conviction of the Israelites. But even if the words really affirmed that a miraculous and objective lengthening of the day did actually take place, we should have no reason whatever for questioning the credibility of the statement. All the objections that have been raised with reference to the reality or possibility of such a miracle, prove to have no force when we examine the subject more closely. Thus, for example, the objection that the annals of the other nations of the earth contain no account of any such miracle, which must have extended over the whole world, loses all its significance from the simple fact that there are no annals in existence belonging to other nations and reaching back to that time, and that it is altogether doubtful whether the miracle would extend far beyond the limits of Palestine. Again, an appeal to the unchangeableness of the motions of the stars according to eternal and unchangeable laws, is not adapted to prove the impossibility of such a miracle. The eternal laws of nature are nothing more than phenomena, or forms of manifestation, of those divine creative powers, the true character of which no mortal has ever fathomed. And does not the almighty Creator and Upholder of nature and all its forces possess the power so to direct and govern the working of these forces, as to make them subservient to the realization of His purposes of salvation? And lastly, the objection that a sudden stoppage of the revolution of the earth upon its axis would have dashed to pieces all the works of human hands that were to be found upon its surface, and hurled the earth itself, with its satellite the moon, out of their orbits, cannot prove anything, because it leaves out of sight the fact that the omnipotent hand of God, which not only created the stars, but gave them the power to revolve with such regularity in their orbits as long as this universe endures, and which upholds and governs all things in heaven and on earth, is

not too short to guard against any such disastrous consequences as these. But to this we may add, that even the strictest and most literal interpretation of the words does not require us to assume, as the fathers and earlier theologians did, that the sun itself was miraculously made to stand still, but simply supposes an optical stopping of the sun in its course,—that is to say, a miraculous suspension of the revolution of the earth upon its axis, which would make it appear to the eye of an observer as if the sun itself were standing still. *Knobel* is by no means warranted in pronouncing this view of the matter an assumption at variance with the text. For the Scriptures speak of the things of the visible world as they appear; just as we speak of the sun as rising and setting, although we have no doubt whatever about the revolution of the earth. Moreover, the omnipotence of God might produce such an optical stoppage of the sun, or rather a continuance of the visibility of the sun above the horizon, by celestial phenomena which are altogether unknown to us or to naturalists in general, without interfering with the general laws affecting the revolution of the heavenly bodies. Only we must not attempt, as some have done, to reduce the whole miracle of divine omnipotence to an unusual refraction of the light, or to the continuance of lightning throughout the whole night.

Vers. 16–27. The five kings fled and hid themselves in the cave that was at Makkedah. When they were discovered there, Joshua ordered large stones to be rolled before the entrance to the cave, and men to be placed there to watch, whilst the others pursued the enemy without ceasing, and smote their rear (*vid.* Deut. xxv. 18), and prevented their entering into their cities. He himself remained at Makkedah (ver. 21).—Vers. 20, 21. When the great battle and the pursuit of the enemy were ended, and such as remained had reached their fortified towns, the people returned to the camp to Joshua at Makkedah in peace, *i.e.* without being attacked by anybody. "*There pointed not* (a dog) *its tongue against the sons of Israel, against any one*" (see at Ex. xi. 7). לְאִישׁ is in apposition to לִבְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, and serves to define it more precisely. It is possible, however, to regard the ל as a copyist's error, as *Houbigant* and *Maurer* do, in which case אִישׁ would be the nominative to the verb. —Vers. 22–27. Joshua then commanded the five kings to be fetched out of the cave, and directed the leaders of the army to set their feet upon the necks of the kings; and when this had been done, he ordered the kings to be put to death, and to be hanged upon

trees until the evening, when their bodies were to be thrown into the cave in which they had concealed themselves. Of course this did not take place till the day after the battle, as the army could not return from their pursuit of the foe to the camp at Makkedah till the night after the battle; possibly it did not take place till the second day, if the pursuit had lasted any longer. In ver. 24, "*all the men of Israel*" are all the warriors in the camp, הַהֹלְכוּא, with ה *artic.*, instead of the relative pronoun (see *Ges.* §109; *Ew.* § 331, *b.*); and the ending וּא for וּ or ן, as in Isa. xxviii. 12 (see *Ew.* § 190, *b.*). The fact that the military leaders set their feet at Joshua's command upon the necks of the conquered kings, was not a sign of barbarity, which it is necessary to excuse by comparing it with still greater barbarities on the part of the Canaanites, as in Judg. i. 7, but was a symbolical act, a sign of complete subjugation, which was customary in this sense even in the Eastern empire (see *Bynæus de calceis*, p. 318, and *Constant. Porphyrogen de cerimon. aulæ Byzant.* ii. 19). It was also intended in this instance to stimulate the Israelites to further conflict with the Canaanites. This is stated in the words of Joshua (ver. 25): "*Fear not, nor be dismayed* (*vid.* chap. i. 9, viii. 1); *for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies.*" On the putting to death and then hanging, see chap. viii. 29 and Deut. xxi. 22, 23. The words וַיָּשִׂימוּ וגו׳ (ver. 27*b*) are generally understood as signifying, that after the bodies of the kings had been cast into the cave, the Israelites placed large stones before the entrance, just as in other cases heaps of stones were piled upon the graves of criminals that had been executed (*vid.* chap. vii. 25), and that these stones remained there till the account before us was written. But this leaves the words עַד עֶצֶם unexplained, as עֶצֶם never occurs in any other case where the formula "until this day" is used with the simple meaning that a thing had continued to the writer's own time. עֶצֶם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה expresses the thought that the day referred to was the very same day about which the author was writing, and no other (see chap. v. 11; Gen. vii. 13, xvii. 23; Ex. xii. 17, etc.). If, therefore, it has any meaning at all in the present instance, we must connect the whole clause with the one preceding, and even construe it as a relative clause: "*where they* (the kings) *had hidden themselves, and they* (the Israelites) *had placed large stones at the mouth of the cave until that very day*" (on which the kings were fetched out and executed).

Vers. 28–39. Further prosecution of the victory, by the conquest of the fortified towns of the south, into which those who

escaped the sword of the Israelites had thrown themselves.—Ver. 28. On the same day on which the five kings were impaled, Joshua took Makkedah (see at ver. 10), and smote the town and its king with the edge of the sword, banning the town and all the persons in it, *i.e.* putting all the inhabitants to death (many MSS. and some editions adopt the reading אֹתָהּ for אֹתָם, as in ver. 37), taking the cattle and the property in the town as booty, as in the case of Ai (chap. viii. 27, 28), and treating its king like the king of Jericho, who was suspended upon a stake, to judge from chap. viii. 2, 29, although this is not stated in chap. vi.—Vers. 29, 30. From Makkedah he went with all Israel, *i.e.* all the men of war, against *Libnah*, and after effecting the conquest of it, did just the same as he had done to Makkedah. *Libnah* was one of the towns of the plain or of the hill-country of Judah (chap. xv. 42); it was allotted to the priests (chap. xxi. 13), revolted from Judah in the reign of Joram (2 Kings viii. 22), and was besieged by Sennacherib (Isa. xxxvii. 8). It is to be sought on the north-west of Lachish, not on the south as *Knobel* erroneously infers from Isa. xxxvii. 8. According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Lebna*), it was at that time *villa in regione Eleutheropolitana, quæ appellatur Lobna.* It has not been discovered yet, but according to the very probable conjecture of *V. de Velde* (Mem. p. 330), the ruins of it may perhaps be seen upon the hill called *Arâk el Menshiyeh*, about two hours to the west of Beit Jibrin.[1]—Vers. 31, 32. *Lachish, i.e. Um Lakis* (see at ver. 3), shared the same fate.—Ver. 33. Joshua also smote the king of *Gezer*, who had come with his people to the help of Lachish, and left no one remaining. Nothing is said about the capture of the town of Gezer. According to chap. xvi. 10 and Judg. i. 29, it was still in the possession of the Canaanites when the land was divided, though this alone is not sufficient to prove that Joshua did not conquer it, as so many of the conquered towns were occupied by the Canaanites again after the Israelites had withdrawn. But its situation makes it very probable that Joshua did not conquer it at that time, as it was too much out of his road, and too far from Lachish. *Gezer* (LXX. Γάζερ, in 1 Chron. xiv. 16 Γαζηρά, in 1 Macc. Γαζήρα or Γάζαρα *plur.*, in

[1] *Knobel* is decidedly wrong in his supposition, that *Libnah* is to be seen in the considerable ruins called *Hora*, which lie in the plain (*Seetzen* and *V. de Velde*) and are called *Hawara* by *Robinson*. He founds his conjecture upon the fact that the name signifies *white*, and is the Arabic translation of the Hebrew name. But *Hora* is only two hours and a half to the north of Beersheba and is not in the plain at all, but in the Negeb.

*Josephus* Γάζαρα, Ant. vii. 4, 1, viii. 6, 1, and also Γάδαρα, v. 1, 22, xii. 7, 4) was on the southern boundary of Ephraim (chap. xvi. 3), and was given up by that tribe to the Levites (chap. xvi. 9, 10, xxi. 20, 21. It is very frequently mentioned. David pursued the Philistines to Gezer (Gazer), after they had been defeated at Gibeon or Geba (2 Sam. v. 25; 1 Chron. xiv. 16). At a later period it was conquered by Pharaoh, and presented to his daughter, who was married to Solomon; and Solomon built, *i.e.* fortified it (1 Kings ix. 16, 17). It was an important fortress in the wars of the Maccabees (1 Macc. ix. 52; 2 Macc. x. 32; cf. 1 Macc. iv. 15, vii. 45, xiii. 53, xiv. 34, xv. 28, 35). According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Gazer*), it was four Roman miles to the north of Nicopolis, *i.e.* Anwas, and was called Γαζάρα. This is not only in harmony with chap. xvi. 3, according to which the southern border of Ephraim ran from Lower Bethhoron to Gezer, and then on to the sea, but also with all the other passages in which Gezer is mentioned,[1] and answers very well to the situation of *el Kubab*, a village of considerable size on a steep hill at the extreme north of the mountain

[1] The statement in 1 Macc. vii. 45, that Judas Maccabæus pursued the army of Nicanor, which had been beaten at Adasa, for a day's journey, as far as Gazera ("a day's journey from Adasa into Gazera"), is perfectly reconcilable with the situation of *el Kubab;* for, according to *Josephus* (Ant. xii. 10, 5), Adasa was thirty stadia from Bethhoron, and Bethhoron is ten miles to the west of Kubab (measuring in a straight line upon the map); so that Judas pursued the enemy fifteen miles,—a distance which might very well be called "a day's journey," if we consider that the enemy, when flying, would not always take the straightest road, and might even make a stand at intervals, and so delay their pursuers. Still less do the statement in 1 Macc. xiv. 34, that Simon fortified Joppa on the sea, and Gazara on the border of Ashdod, the combination of Joppa, Gazara, and the tower that is in Jerusalem (1 Macc. xv. 28, 35), and the fact that the country of Gadaris, with the town of Gadara, occurs between Joppa and Jamnia in *Strabo* xvi. 759, warrant us in making a distinction between Gazara (Gezer) and the place mentioned in the *Onom.*, as *Grimm* does (on 1 Macc. iv. 15), and identifying it with the village of *Jazûr*, an hour and a half from Jaffa, although *Arvieux* calls this village *Gesser*. The objections of *Van de Velde* against the identity of Kubab and Gazer are without any force. It does not necessarily follow from the expression "went up," that Lachish stood on higher ground than Gezer, as going up often signifies nothing more than making a hostile attack upon a fortification. And no importance can be attached to the conjecture, that with the great distance of Kubab from Um Lakis, the king of Gezer would have come to the help of the kings of Makkedah and Libnah, who were much nearer and were attacked first, as the circumstances which determined his conduct are too thoroughly unknown to us, for it to be possible to pronounce an opinion upon the subject with any certainty.

chain which runs to the north-west of Zorea, and slopes off towards the north into the broad plain of Merj el Omeir, almost in the middle of the road from Ramleh to Yalo. For this village, with which *Van Semden* identifies Gezer (*Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 315), was exactly four Roman miles north by west of Anwas, according to *Robinson's* map, and not quite four hours from Akir (Ekron), the most northerly city of the Philistines; so that *Josephus* (Ant. vii. 4, 1) could very properly describe Gazara as the frontier of the territory of the Philistines. *Robinson* discovered no signs of antiquity, it is true, on his journey through Kubab, but in all probability he did not look for them, as he did not regard the village as a place of any importance in connection with ancient history (Bibl. Res. pp. 143–4).

Vers. 34, 35. From Lachish Joshua proceeded eastwards against Eglon (Ajlan, see ver. 3), took the town, and did to it as he had done to Lachish.—Vers. 36, 37. From Eglon he went up from the lowland to the mountains, attacked Hebron and took it, and did to this town and its king, and the towns belonging to it, as he had already done to the others. The king of Hebron cannot of course be the one who was taken in the cave of Makkedah and put to death there, but his successor, who had entered upon the government while Joshua was occupied with the conquest of the towns mentioned in vers. 28–35, which may possibly have taken more than a year. "*All the cities thereof*" are the towns dependent upon Hebron as the capital of the kingdom.—Vers. 38, 39. Joshua then turned southwards with all Israel (*i.e.* all the army), attacked *Debir* and took it, and the towns dependent upon it, in the same manner as those mentioned before. *Debir*, formerly called *Kirjath-sepher*, *i.e.* book town, πόλις γραμμάτων (LXX. chap. xv. 15; Judg. i. 11), and *Kirjath-sanna*, *i.e.* in all probability the city of palm branches (chap. xv. 49), was given up by Judah to the priests (chap. xxi. 15). It stood upon the mountains of Judah (chap. xv. 49), to the south of Hebron, but has not yet been certainly discovered, though *V. de Velde* is probably correct in his supposition that it is to be seen in the ruins of *Dilbeh*, on the peak of a hill to the north of Wady Dilbeh, and on the road from Dhoberiyeh to Hebron, about two hours to the south-west of the latter. For, according to *Dr Stewart*, there is a spring at *Dilbeh*, the water of which is conducted by an aqueduct into the Birket el Dilbeh, at the foot of the said hill, which would answer very well to the upper and lower springs at Debir, if only Debir might be placed, according to chap. xv. 49, so

far towards the north.[1] Moreover, not very long afterwards, probably during the time when the Israelites were occupied with the subjugation of northern Canaan, Hebron and Debir were taken again by the Canaanites, particularly the Anakites, as Joshua had not entirely destroyed them, although he had thoroughly cleared the mountains of Judah of them, but had left them still in the towns of the Philistines (chap. xi. 21, 22). Consequently, when the land was divided, there were Anakites living in both Hebron and Debir; so that Caleb, to whom these towns were given as his inheritance, had first of all to conquer them again, and to exterminate the Anakites (chap. xiv. 12, xv. 13–17: cf. Judg. i. 10–13).[2]

Vers. 40–43. *Summary of the Conquest of the whole of Southern Canaan.*—In the further prosecution of his victory over the five allied kings, Joshua smote the whole land, *i.e.* the whole of the south of Canaan from Gibeon onwards, in all its districts, namely

[1] *Knobel* imagines that Debir is to be found in the modern village of *Dhoberiyeh (Dhabarije)*, five hours to the south-west of Hebron, on the south-west border of the mountains of Judah, upon the top of a mountain, because, in addition to the situation of this village, which is perfectly reconcilable with chap. xv. 49, there are remains of a square tower there (according to *Krafft*, a Roman tower), which point to an ancient fortification (*vid. Rob.* Pal. i. pp. 308 sqq.; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 202 sqq.), and because the name, which signifies "placed behind the back," agrees with *Debir*, the hinder part or back (?), and *Kirjath-sepher*, if interpreted by the Arabic words, which signify "*extremitas, margo, ora.*" But both reasons prove very little. The meanings assigned to *Debir* and *Kirjath-sepher* are improbable and arbitrary. Moreover, it has not been shown that there are any springs near Dhoberiyeh, such as there were in the neighbourhood of Debir (chap. xv. 19 sqq.). The view held by *Rosenmüller*, and adopted by *Bunsen*, with regard to the situation of *Debir*,—namely, that it was the same as the modern *Idwirbân* or *Dewirbân*, an hour and a quarter to the west of Hebron, because there is a large spring there with an abundant supply of excellent water, which goes by the name of *Ain Nunkûr*,—is also quite untenable; for it is entirely at variance with chap. xv. 49, according to which Debir was not on the west of Hebron, but upon the mountains to the south, and rests entirely upon the erroneous assumption that, according to ver. 38 (וַיָּשָׁב, he turned round), as Joshua came from Eglon, he conquered Hebron first, and after the conquest of this town turned *back* to Debir, to take it also. But שׁוּב does not mean only to turn round or turn back: it signifies turning generally; and it is very evident that this is the sense in which it is used in ver. 38, since, according to chap. xv. 49, Debir was on the south of Hebron.

[2] By this simple assumption we get rid of the pretended contradictions, which neological critics have discovered between chap. x. 36–39 on the one hand, and chap. xi. 21, 22, and xiv. 12, xv. 13–17 on the other, and on account of which *Knobel* would assign the passages last named to a different document. On the first conquest of the land by Joshua, *Masius* observes that "in

the mountains (chap. xv. 48), the Negeb (the south land, chap. xv. 21), the lowlands (chap. xv. 33), and the slopes, *i.e.* the hill region (chap. xii. 8, and comm. on Num. xxi. 15), and all the kings of these different districts, banning every living thing (כָּל־נְשָׁמָה = כָּל־נֶפֶשׁ, vers. 28, 30, *i.e.* all the men; *vid.* Deut. xx. 16), as Jehovah had commanded, viz. Num. xxxiii. 51 sqq.; Deut. vii. 1, 2, xx. 16. He smote them from Kadesh-barnea, on the southern boundary of Canaan (chap. xv. 3; see at Num. xii. 16), to Gaza (see at Gen. x. 9), and all the country of *Goshen*, a different place from the Goshen of Egypt, deriving its name in all probability from the town of *Goshen* on the southern portion of the mountains (chap. xv. 51). As the line "*from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza*" defines the extent of the conquered country from south to north on the western side, so the parallel clause, "*all the country of Goshen, even unto Gibeon*," defines the extent from south to north on the eastern side. There is no tenable ground for the view expressed by *Knobel*, which rests upon very uncertain etymological combinations, that the land of Goshen signifies the hill country between the mountains and the plain, and is equivalent to אֲשֵׁדוֹת.—Ver. 42. All these kings and their country Joshua took "*once*," *i.e.* in one campaign, which lasted, however, a considerable time (cf. chap. xi. 18). He was able to accomplish this, because Jehovah the God of Israel fought for Israel (see ver. 14). After this he returned with the army to the camp at Gilgal (Jiljilia, see p. 93; cf. ver. 15).

## DEFEAT OF THE KINGS OF NORTHERN CANAAN. SUBJUGATION OF THE WHOLE LAND.—CHAP. XI.

Vers. 1–15. THE WAR IN NORTHERN CANAAN.—Vers. 1–3. On receiving intelligence of what had occurred in the south, the king of Hazor formed an alliance with the kings of Madon, Shimron, and Achshaph, and other kings of the north, to make a common attack upon the Israelites. This league originated with Jabin the king of Hazor, because Hazor was formerly the head of

this expedition Joshua ran through the southern region with an armed band, in too hurried a manner to depopulate it entirely. All that he needed was to strike such terror into the hearts of all through his victories, that no one should henceforth offer any resistance to himself and to the people of God. Those whom he pursued, therefore, he destroyed according to the commands of God, not sparing a single one, but he did not search out every possible hiding-place in which any could be concealed. This was left as a gleaning to the valour of each particular tribe, when it should take possession of its own inheritance."

all the kingdoms of northern Canaan (ver. 10). *Hazor*, which Joshua conquered and burned to the ground (vers. 10, 11), was afterwards restored, and became a capital again (Judg. iv. 2; 1 Sam. xii. 9); it was fortified by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 15), and taken by Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings xv. 29). It belonged to the tribe of Naphtali (chap. xix. 36), but has not yet been discovered. According to *Josephus* (Ant. v. 5, 1), it was above the Lake of Samochonitis, the present Bahr el Huleh. *Robinson* conjectures that it is to be found in the ruins upon Tell *Khuraibeh*, opposite to the north-west corner of the lake of Huleh, the situation of which would suit Hazor quite well, as it is placed between Ramah and Kedesh in chap. xix. 35, 36 (see Bibl. Res. p. 364). On the other hand, the present ruins of *Huzzur* or *Hazireh*, where there are the remains of large buildings of a very remote antiquity (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 62), with which *Knobel* identifies Hazor, cannot be thought of for a moment, as these ruins, which are about an hour and a quarter to the south-west of Yathir, are so close to the Ramah of Asher (chap. xix. 29) that Hazor must also have belonged to Asher, and could not possibly have been included in the territory of Naphtali. There would be more reason for thinking of Tell *Hazûr* or *Khirbet Hazûr*, on the south-west of Szafed (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 81); but these ruins are not very ancient, and only belong to an ordinary village, and not to a town at all. *Madon* is only mentioned again in chap. xii. 19, and its situation is quite unknown. *Shimron*, called Shimron-meron in chap. xii. 20, was allotted to the tribe of Zebulun (chap. xix. 15), and is also unknown. For *Meron* cannot be connected, as *Knobel* supposes, with the village and ruins of *Marôn*, not far from Kedesh, on the south-west (see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 371), or *Shimron* with the ruins of *Khuraibeh*, an hour to the south of Kedesh; as the territory of Zebulun, to which Shimron belonged, did not reach so far north, and there is not the slightest ground for assuming that there were two Shimrons, or for making a distinction between the royal seat mentioned here and the Shimron of Zebulun. There is also no probability in *Knobel's* conjecture, that the *Shimron* last named is the same as the small village of *Semunieh*, probably the *Simonias* of *Josephus* (Vita, § 24), on the west of Nazareth (see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 201). *Achshaph*, a border town of Asher (chap. xix. 25), is also unknown, and is neither to be sought, as *Robinson* supposes (Bibl. Res. p. 55), in the ruins of *Kesâf*, which lie even farther north than *Abel* (*Abil*), in the tribe of Naphtali, and therefore much too far

to the north to have formed the boundary of Asher; nor to be identified with *Acco* (*Ptolemais*), as *Knobel* imagines, since *Acco* has nothing in common with *Achshaph* except the letter *caph* (see also at chap. xix. 25).—Ver. 2. Jabin also allied himself with the kings of the north "*upon the mountains*," *i.e.* the mountains of Naphtali (chap. xx. 7), and "*in the Arabah to the south of Chinnereth*" (chap. xix. 35), *i.e.* in the Ghor to the south of the sea of Galilee, and "*in the lowland*," *i.e.* the northern portion of it, as far down as Joppa, and "*upon the heights of Dor.*" The town of *Dor*, which was built by Phœnicians, who settled there on account of the abundance of the purple mussels (*Steph. Byz. s. v.* Δῶρος), was allotted to the Manassites in the territory of Asher (chap. xvii. 11; cf. xix. 26), and taken possession of by the children of Joseph (1 Chron. vii. 29). It was situated on the Mediterranean Sea, below the promontory of Carmel, nine Roman miles north of Cæsarea, and is at the present time a hamlet called *Tantura* or *Tortura*, with very considerable ruins (*Wilson*, The Holy Land, ii. 249, and *V. de Velde*, Journey, i. p. 251). The old town was a little more than a mile to the north, on a small range of hills, which is covered with ruins (*Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 608–9; *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 307), and on the north of which there are rocky ranges, with many grottos, and houses cut in the rock itself (*Buckingham*, Syria, i. pp. 101–2). These are "the heights of Dor," or "the high range of Dor" (chap. xii. 23; 1 Kings iv. 11).—Ver. 3. "*Namely, with the Canaanites on the east and west, the Amorites*" and other tribes dwelling upon the mountains (*vid.* chap. iii. 10), and "*the Hivites under the Hermon in the land of Mizpah*," *i.e.* the country below *Hasbeya*, between *Nahr Hasbany* on the east, and *Merj Ayûn* on the west, with the village of *Mutulleh* or *Mtelleh*, at present inhabited by Druses, which stands upon a hill more than 200 feet high, and from which there is a splendid prospect over the Huleh basin. It is from this that it has derived its name, which signifies prospect, *specula*, answering to the Hebrew *Mizpah* (see *Robinson*, Bibl. Res. p. 372).

Vers. 4–9. These came out with their armies, a people as numerous as the sand by the sea-shore (*vid.* Gen. xxii. 17, etc.), and very many horses and chariots. All these kings agreed together, *sc.* concerning the war and the place of battle, and encamped at *Merom* to fight against Israel. The name *Merom* (*Meirûm* in the Arabic version) answers to *Meirôm*, a village whose name is also pronounced *Meirûm*, a celebrated place of pilgrimage among the

Jews, because Hillel, Shammai, Simeon ben Jochai, and other noted Rabbins are said to be buried there (see *Robinson*, Pal. iii. p. 333), about two hours' journey north-west of Szafed, upon a rocky mountain, at the foot of which there is a spring that forms a small brook and flows away through the valley below Szafed (*Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 127–8; *Robinson*, Bibl. Res. pp. 73 sqq.). This stream, which is said to reach the Lake of Tiberias, in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida, is in all probability to be regarded as the "waters of of Merom," as, according to Josephus (Ant. v. 1, 18), "these kings encamped at Berothe (de. Bell. Jud. xx. 6, and Vit. 37, '*Meroth*'), a city of Upper Galilee, not far from Kedese."[1]

Vers. 6 sqq. On account of this enormous number, and the might of the enemy, who were all the more to be dreaded because of their horses and chariots, the Lord encouraged Joshua again,[2] as in chap. viii. 1, by promising him that on the morrow He would deliver them all up slain before Israel; only Joshua was to lame their horses (Gen. xlix. 6) and burn their chariots. אָנֹכִי before נֹתֵן gives emphasis to the sentence: "I will provide for this; by my power, which is immeasurable, as I have shown thee so many times, and by my nod, by which heaven and earth are shaken, shall these things be done" (*Masius*).—Vers. 7, 8. With this to inspirit them, the Israelites fell upon the enemy and smote them, chasing them towards the north-west to Sidon, and westwards as far as Misrephothmaim, and into the plain of Mizpah on the east. *Sidon* is called the great (as in chap. xix. 28), because at that time it was the metropolis of Phœnicia; whereas even by the time of David it had lost its ancient splendour, and was outstripped by its daughter city Tyre. It is still to be seen in the town of *Saida*, a town of five or six thousand inhabitants, with many large and well-built

[1] The traditional opinion that "waters of Merom" is the Old Testament name for the Lake of Samochonitis, or Huleh, is not founded upon any historical evidence, but is simply an inference of *Hadr. Reland* (Pal. Ill. p. 262), (1) from the statement made by *Josephus* (Ant. v. 5, 1), that Hazor was above the Lake of Samochonitis, it being taken for granted without further reason that the battle occurred at Hazor, and (2) from the supposed similarity in the meaning of the names, viz. that *Samochonitis* is derived from an Arabic word signifying to be high, and therefore means the same as *Merom* (height), though here again the *zere* is disregarded, and *Merom* is arbitrarily identified with *Marom*.

[2] "As there was so much more difficulty connected with the destruction of so populous and well-disciplined an army, it was all the more necessary that he should be inspired with fresh confidence. For this reason God appeared to Joshua, and promised him the same success as He had given him so many times before."—*Calvin*.

houses (see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 415, and *Movers*, Phönizier, ii. 1, pp. 86 sqq.). *Misrephothmaim* (mentioned also at chap. xiii. 6), which the Greek translators have taken as a proper name, though the Rabbins and some Christian commentators render it in different ways, such as salt-pits, smelting-huts, or glass-huts (see *Ges.* Thes. p. 1341), is a collection of springs, called *Ain Mesherfi*, at the foot of the promontory to which with its steep pass the name of *Ras el Nakhûra* is given, the *scala Tyriorum* or *Passepoulain* of the Crusaders (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 335, and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. p. 807). בִּקְעַת מִצְפֶּה (*Eng. Ver.* "the valley of Mizpeh") is probably the basin of the *Huleh* lake and of Nahr *Hasbany*, on the western side of which lay the land of *Mizpah* (ver. 3).—Ver. 9. Joshua carried out the command of the Lord with regard to the chariots and horses.

Vers. 10–15. After destroying the foe, and returning from the pursuit, Joshua took Hazor, smote its king and all the inhabitants with the edge of the sword, and burned the town, the former leader of all those kingdoms. He did just the same to the other towns, except that he did not burn them, but left them standing upon their hills. הָעֹמְדוֹת עַל־תִּלָּם (ver. 13) neither contains an allusion to any special fortification of the towns, nor implies a contrast to the towns built in the valleys and plains, but simply expresses the thought that these towns were still standing upon their hill, *i.e.* upon the old site (cf. Jer. xxx. 18: the participle does not express the preterite, but the present). At the same time, the expression certainly implies that the towns were generally built upon hills. The pointing in תִּלָּם is not to be altered, as *Knobel* suggests. The singular "*upon their hill*" is to be taken as distributive: standing, now as then, each upon its hill.—With ver. 15, "*as Jehovah commanded His servant Moses*" (cf. Num. xxxiii. 52 sqq.; Deut. vii. 1 sqq., xx. 16), the account of the wars of Joshua is brought to a close, and the way opened for proceeding to the concluding remarks with reference to the conquest of the whole land (vers. 16–23). לֹא הֵסִיר דָּבָר, he put not away a word, *i.e.* left nothing undone.

Vers. 16–23. RETROSPECTIVE VIEW OF THE CONQUEST OF THE WHOLE LAND.—Vers. 16, 17. Joshua took all this land, namely, those portions of Southern Canaan that have already been mentioned in chap. x. 40, 41; also the Arabah, and the mountains of Israel and its lowlands (see ver. 2), *i.e.* the northern part of the land (in the campaign described in vers. 1–15), that is to say, Canaan in all its extent, "*from the bald mountain which goeth up to*

*Seir*" in the south, "*to Baal-gad, in the valley of Lebanon under Hermon.*" The "*bald mountain*" (*Halak*), which is mentioned here and in chap. xii. 7 as the southern boundary of Canaan, is hardly the row of white cliffs which stretches obliquely across the Arabah eight miles below the Dead Sea and forms the dividing line that separates this valley into *el-Ghor* and *el-Araba* (*Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 489, 492), or the present *Madara*, a strange-looking chalk-hill to the south-west of the pass of Sufah (*Rob.* ii. p. 589), a steep bare mountain in a barren plain, the sides of which consist of stone and earth of a leaden ashy hue (*Seetzen*, R. iii. pp. 14, 15); but in all probability the northern edge of the Azazimeh mountain with its white and glistening masses of chalk. *Baal-gad*, *i.e.* the place or town of Baal, who was there worshipped as Gad (see Isa. lxv. 11), also called *Baal-hermon* in Judg. iii. 3 and 1 Chron. v. 23, is not Baalbek, but the *Paneas* or *Cæsarea Philippi* of a later time, the present *Banjas* (see at Num. xxxiv. 8, 9). This is the opinion of *v. Raumer* and *Robinson*, though *Van de Velde* is more disposed to look for Baal-gad in the ruins of *Kalath* (the castle of) *Bostra*, or of *Kalath Aisafa*, the former an hour and a half, the latter three hours to the north of Banjas, the situation of which would accord with the biblical statements respecting Baal-gad exceedingly well. The "*valley of Lebanon*" is not *Cœle-Syria*, the modern *Bekâa*, between Lebanon and Antilibanus, but the valley at the foot of the southern slope of Jebel Sheik (Hermon).—Vers. 18 sqq. Joshua made war with the kings of Canaan a long time; judging from chap. xiv. 7, 10, as much as seven years, though Josephus (Ant. v. 1, 19) speaks of five (see at chap. xiv. 10). No town submitted peaceably to the Israelites, with the exception of Gibeon: they took the whole in war. "*For it was of the Lord*" (ver. 20), *i.e.* God ordered it so that they (the Canaanites) hardened their heart to make war upon Israel, that they might fall under the ban, and be destroyed without mercy. On the hardening of the heart as a work of God, see the remarks upon the hardening of Pharaoh (Ex. iv. 21). It cannot be inferred from this, that if the Canaanites had received the Israelites amicably, God would have withdrawn His command to destroy them, and allowed the Israelites to make peace with them; for when they made peace with the Gibeonites, they did not inquire what was the will of the Lord, but acted in opposition to it (see at chap. ix. 14). The remark is made with special reference to this, and has been correctly explained by *Augustine* (qu. 8 in Jos.) as follows: "Because the Israelites had

shown mercy to some of them of their own accord, though in opposition to the command of God, therefore it is stated that they (the Canaanites) made war upon them so that none of them were spared, and the Israelites were not induced to show mercy to the neglect of the commandment of God."

In vers. 21, 22, the destruction of the Anakites upon the mountains of Judah and Israel is introduced in a supplementary form, which completes the history of the subjugation and extermination of the Canaanites in the south of the land (chap. x.). This supplement is not to be regarded either as a fragment interpolated by a different hand, or as a passage borrowed from another source. On the contrary, the author himself thought it necessary, having special regard to Num. xiii. 28, 31 sqq., to mention expressly that Joshua also rooted out from their settlements the sons of Anak, whom the spies in the time of Moses had described as terrible giants, and drove them into the Philistine cities of Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. "*At that time*" points back to the "long time," mentioned in ver. 18, during which Joshua was making war upon the Canaanites. The words "cut off," etc., are explained correctly by *Clericus:* "Those who fell into his hands he slew, the rest he put to flight, though, as we learn from chap. xv. 14, they afterwards returned." (On the *Anakim*, see at Num. xiii. 22.) They had their principal settlement upon the mountains in Hebron (*el Khulil*, see chap. x. 3), Debir (see at chap. x. 38), and Anab. The last place (*Anab*), upon the mountains of Judah (chap. xv. 50), has been preserved along with the old name in the village of *Anâb*, four or five hours to the south of Hebron, on the eastern side of the great Wady *el Khulil*, which runs from Hebron down to Beersheba (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 193). "*And from all* (the rest of) *the mountains of Judah, and all the mountains of Israel:*" the latter are called the *mountains of Ephraim in chap. xvii. 15.* The two together form *the real basis of the land of Canaan, and are separated from one another by the large Wady Beit Hanina* (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 333). They received their respective names from the fact that the southern portion of the mountain land of Canaan fell to the tribe of Judah as its inheritance, and the northern part to the tribe of Ephraim and other tribes of Israel.[1] *Gaza, Gath,* and *Ashdod* were towns

[1] [illegible] may be explained without difficulty even from [illegible] Judah and the double tribe of Joseph [illegible] received their inheritance by lot before any of the [illegible] into the territory allotted to

of the Philistines; of these Gaza and Ashdod were allotted to the tribe of Judah (chap. xv. 47), but were never taken possession of by the Israelites, although the Philistines were sometimes subject to the Israelites (see at chap. xiii. 3).—With ver. 23*a*, "*thus Joshua took the whole land*" etc., the history of the conquest of Canaan by Joshua is brought to a close; and ver. 23*b*, "*and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel*," forms a kind of introduction to the second part of the book. The list of the conquered kings in chap. xii. is simply an appendix to the first part.

The taking of the *whole* land does not imply that all the towns and villages to the very last had been conquered, or that all the Canaanites were rooted out from every corner of the land, but simply that the conquest was of such a character that the power of the Canaanites was broken, their dominion overthrown, and their whole land so thoroughly given into the hands of the Israelites, that those who still remained here and there were crushed into powerless fugitives, who could neither offer any further opposition to the Israelites, nor dispute the possession of the land with them, if they would only strive to fulfil the commandments of their God and persevere in the gradual extermination of the scattered remnants. Moreover, Israel had received the strongest pledge, in the powerful help which it had received from the Lord in the conquests thus far obtained, that the faithful covenant God would continue His help in the conflicts which still remained, and secure for it a complete victory and the full possession of the promised land. Looking,

them in the south, all the other tribes still remained in Gilgal; and even at a later period, when Ephraim and Manasseh were in their possessions, all Israel, with the exception of Judah, were still encamped at Shiloh. Moreover, the two parts of the nation were now separated by the territory which was afterwards assigned to the tribe of Benjamin, but had no owner at this time; and in addition to this, the altar, tabernacle, and ark of the covenant were in the midst of Joseph and the other tribes that were still assembled at Shiloh. Under such circumstances, then, would not the idea of a distinction between Judah, on the one hand, and the rest of Israel, in which the double tribe of Joseph and then the single tribe of Ephraim acquired such peculiar prominence, on the other, shape itself more and more in the mind, and what already existed in the germ begin to attain maturity even here? And what could be more natural than that the mountains in which the "children of Judah" had their settlements should be called the mountains of *Judah;* and the mountains where all the rest of Israel was encamped, where the "children of Israel" were gathered together, be called the mountains of *Israel*, and, as that particular district really belonged to the tribe of Ephraim, the mountains of *Ephraim* also? (chap. xix. 50, xx. 7; also xxiv. 30.)

therefore, at the existing state of things from this point of view, Joshua had taken possession of the whole land, and could now proceed to finish the work entrusted to him by the Lord, by dividing the land among the tribes of Israel. Joshua had really done all that the Lord had said to Moses. For the Lord had not only promised to Moses the complete extermination of the Canaanites, but had also told him that He would not drive out the Canaanites at once, or "in one year," but only little by little, until Israel multiplied and took the land (Ex. xxiii. 28–30; cf. Deut. vii. 22). Looking at this promise, therefore, the author of the book could say with perfect justice, that "*Joshua took the whole land according to all that* (precisely in the manner in which) *the Lord had said to Moses.*" But this did not preclude the fact, that a great deal still remained to be done before all the Canaanites could be utterly exterminated from every part of the land. Consequently, the enumeration of towns and districts that were not yet conquered, and of Canaanites who still remained, which we find in chap. xiii. 1–6, xvii. 14 sqq., xviii. 3, xxiii. 5, 12, forms no discrepancy with the statements in the verses before us, so as to warrant us in adopting any critical hypotheses or conclusions as to the composition of the book by different authors. The Israelites could easily have taken such portions of the land as were still unconquered, and could have exterminated all the Canaanites who remained, without any severe or wearisome conflicts; if they had but persevered in fidelity to their God and in the fulfilment of His commandments. If, therefore, the complete conquest of the whole land was not secured in the next few years, but, on the contrary, the Canaanites repeatedly gained the upper hand over the Israelites; we must seek for the explanation, not in the fact that Joshua had not completely taken and conquered the land, but simply in the fact that the Lord had withdrawn His help from His people because of their apostasy from Him, and had given them up to the power of their enemies to chastise them for their sins.—The distribution of the land for an inheritance to the Israelites took place "*according to their divisions by their tribes.*" מַחְלְקוֹת denote the division of the twelve tribes of Israel into families, fathers' houses, and households; and is so used not only here, but in chap. xii. 7 and xviii. 10. Compare with this 1 Chron. xxiii. 6, xxiv. 1, etc., where it is applied to the different orders of priests and Levites. "*And the land rested from war:*" *i.e.* the war was ended, so that the peaceable task of distributing the land by lot could

now be proceeded with (*vid.* chap. xiv. 15; Judg. iii. 11, 30, v. 31).

## LIST OF THE KINGS SLAUGHTERED BY THE ISRAELITES.—CHAP. XII.

In the historical account of the wars of Joshua in the south and north of Canaan, the only kings mentioned by name as having been conquered and slain by the Israelites, were those who had formed a league to make war upon them; whereas it is stated at the close, that Joshua had smitten all the kings in the south and north, and taken possession of their towns (chap. x. 40, xi. 17). To complete the account of these conquests, therefore, a detailed list is given in the present chapter of all the kings that were slain, and not merely of those who were defeated by Joshua in the country on this side of the Jordan, but the two kings of the Amorites who had been conquered by Moses are also included, so as to give a complete picture of all the victories which Israel had gained under the omnipotent help of its God.

Vers. 1–6. List of the *kings* whom the Israelites smote, and whose land they took, *on the other side of the Jordan*,—namely, the land by the brook Arnon (Mojeb; see Num. xxi. 13) to Hermon (Jebel es Sheikh, Deut. iii. 8), and the whole of the eastern Arabah (the valley of the Jordan on the eastern side of the river).—Vers. 2, 3. On Sihon and his kingdom, see Num. xxi. 24; Deut. ii. 36, iii. 16, 17. "*Aroër on the Arnon:*" the present ruins of *Araayr*, on the northern bank of the Mojeb (see Num. xxxii. 34). וְתוֹךְ הַנַּחַל, "*and* (from) *the middle of the valley onwards:*" *i.e.*, according to the parallel passages in chap. xiii. 9, 16, and Deut. ii. 36, from the town in the Arnon valley, the city of Moab mentioned in Num. xxii. 36, viz. *Ar* or *Areopolis* (see at Num. xxi. 15) in the neighbourhood of Aroër, which is mentioned as the exclusive *terminus a quo* of the land taken by the Israelites along with the inclusive terminus Aroër. "*Half-Gilead*," *i.e.* the mountainous district on the south side of the Jabbok (see at Deut. iii. 10), "*to the river Jabbok*," *i.e.* the upper Jabbok, the present Nahr Ammân (see at Num. xxi. 24).—Ver. 3. "*And* (over) *the Arabah*, etc., *Sihon reigned*," *i.e.* over the eastern side of the Ghor, between the Sea of Galilee and the Dead Sea (see at Deut. iii. 17). "*By the way to Bethjeshimoth, and towards the south below the slopes of Pisgah*" (see at Num. xxi. 15 and xxvii. 12), *i.e.* to the north-

eastern border of the desert by the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxii. 1). —Vers. 4, 5. "*And the territory of Og*," *sc.* they took possession of (ver. 1). On Og, *vid.* Deut. iii. 11; and on his residences, *Ashtaroth* (probably to be seen in Tell *Ashtereh*) and *Edrei* (now *Draa* or *Dêra*), see at Gen. xiv. 5 and Num. xxi. 33. On his territory, see Deut. iii. 10, 13, 14.—Ver. 6. These two kings were smitten by Moses, etc.: *vid.* Num. xxi. 21 sqq., and xxxii. 33 sqq.

Vers. 7–24. List of the *thirty-one kings of Canaan* whom Joshua smote on the western side of the Jordan, "*from Baal-gad, in the valley of Lebanon, to the bald mountain that goeth up towards Seir*" (see chap. xi. 17). This land Joshua gave to the other tribes of Israel. (On the different parts of the land, see at chap. ix. 1, x. 40, and xi. 2.)—Vers. 9 sqq. The different kings are given in the order in which they were defeated: Jericho (chap. vi. 1); Ai (chap. vii. 2); Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon (chap. x. 3); Gezer (chap. x. 33); and Debir (chap. x. 38). Those given in vers. 13*b* and 14 are not mentioned by name in chap. x. *Geder*, possibly the same as *Gedor* upon the mountains of Judah (chap. xv. 58), which has been preserved under the old name of *Jedur* (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 186, and Bibl. Res. p. 282). *Hormah* (*i.e.* banning) was in the south of Judah (chap. xv. 30), and was allotted to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 4). It was called *Zephath* by the Canaanites (Judg. i. 17; see at Num. xxi. 3), was on the southern slope of the mountains of the Amalekites or Amorites, the present ruins of *Sepâta*, on the western slope of the table-land of *Rakhma*, two hours and a half to the south-west of Khalasa (Elusa: see *Ritter*, Erdk. xiv. p. 1085). *Arad*, also in the Negeb, has been preserved in Tell *Arad* (see at Num. xxi. 1). *Libnah* (see at chap. x. 29). *Adullam*, which is mentioned in chap. xv. 35 among the towns of the plain between Jarmuth and Socoh, was in the neighbourhood of a large cave in which David took refuge when flying from Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 1; 2 Sam. xxiii. 13). It was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 7), and is mentioned in 2 Macc. xii. 38 as the city of Odollam. The *Onomast.* describes it as being ten Roman miles to the east of Eleutheropolis; but this is a mistake, though it has not yet been discovered. So far as the situation is concerned, *Deir Dubbân* would suit very well, a place about two hours to the north of Beit Jibrin, near to a large number of caves in the white limestone, which form a kind of labyrinth, as well as some vaulted grottos (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 353, and *Van de Velde*, Reise. pp. 162–3). *Makkedah:* possibly *Summeil*

(see at chap. x. 10). *Bethel, i.e. Beitin* (see chap. viii. 17). The situation of the towns which follow in vers. 17 and 18 cannot be determined with certainty, as the names *Tappuach*, *Aphek*, and *Hefer* are met with again in different parts of Canaan, and *Lassaron* does not occur again. But if we observe, that just as from ver. 10 onwards those kings'-towns are first of all enumerated, the capture of which has already been described in chap. x., and then in vers. 15 and 16 certain other towns are added which had been taken in the war with the Canaanites of the south, so likewise in vers. 19 and 20 the capitals of the allied kings of northern Canaan are given first, and after that the other towns that were taken in the northern war, but had not been mentioned by name in chap. xi.: there can be no doubt whatever that the four towns in vers. 17 and 18 are to be classed among the kings'-towns taken in the war with the king of Jerusalem and his allies, and therefore are to be sought for in the south of Canaan and not in the north. Consequently we cannot agree with *Van de Velde* and *Knobel* in identifying *Tappuach* with *En-Tappuach* (chap. xvii. 7), and looking for it in *Atûf*, a place to the north-east of Nablus and near the valley of the Jordan; we connect it rather with *Tappuach* in the lowlands of Judah (chap. xv. 34), though the place itself has not yet been discovered. *Hefer* again is neither to be identified with Gath-hepher in the tribe of Zebulun (chap. xix. 13), nor with *Chafaraim* in the tribe of Issachar (chap. xix. 19), but is most probably the capital of the land of *Hefer* (1 Kings iv. 10), and to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Socoh in the plain of Judah. *Aphek* is probably the town of that name not far from Ebenezer (1 Sam. iv. 1), where the ark was taken by the Philistines, and is most likely to be sought for in the plain of Judah, though not in the village of *Ahbek* (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 343); but it has not yet been traced. *Knobel* imagines that it was Aphek near to Jezreel (1 Sam. xxix. 1), which was situated, according to the *Onom.*, in the neighbourhood of Endor (1 Sam. xxix. 1; 1 Kings xx. 26, 30); but this Aphek is too far north. *Lassaron* only occurs here, and hitherto it has been impossible to trace it. *Knobel* supposes it to be the place called *Saruneh*, to the west of the lake of Tiberias, and conjectures that the name has been contracted from Lassaron by aphæresis of the liquid. This is quite possible, if only we could look for Lassaron so far to the north. *Bachienne* and *Rosenmüller* imagine it to be the village of *Sharon* in the celebrated plain of that name, between Lydda and Arsuf.—Vers. 19, 20. *Madon*, *Hezor*,

*Shimron-meron*, and *Achshaph* (see at chap. xi. 1).—Ver. 21. *Taanach*, which was allotted to the Manassites in the territory of Issachar, and given up to the Levites (chap. xvii. 11, xxi. 25), but was not entirely wrested from the Canaanites (Judg. i. 27), is the present Tell *Taënak*, an hour and a quarter to the south-east of Lejun, a flat hill sown with corn; whilst the old name has been preserved in the small village of *Taânak*, at the south-eastern foot of the Tell (see *Van de Velde*, i. p. 269, and *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 156).—*Megiddo*, which was also allotted to the Manassites in the territory of Issachar, though without the Canaanites having been entirely expelled (chap. xvii. 11; Judg. i. 27), was fortified by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 15), and is also well known as the place were Ahaziah died (2 Kings ix. 27), and where Josiah was beaten and slain by Pharaoh Necho (2 Kings xxiii. 29, 30; 2 Chron. xxxv. 20 sqq.). *Robinson* has shown that it was preserved in the *Legio* of a later time, the present *Lejun* (Pal. iii. pp. 177 sqq.; see also Bibl. Res. p. 116).—Ver. 22. *Kedesh*, a Levitical city and city of refuge upon the mountains of Naphtali (chap. xix. 37, xx. 7, xxi. 32), the home of Barak (Judg. iv. 6), was conquered and depopulated by Tiglath-Pileser (2 Kings xv. 29), and was also a well-known place after the captivity (1 Macc. xi. 61 sqq.). It is now an insignificant village, still bearing the ancient name, to the north-west of the lake of Huleh, or, according to *Van de Velde* (Reise. ii. p. 355), nothing but a miserable farmstead upon a Tell at the south-west extremity of a well-cultivated table-land, with a large quantity of antiquities about, viz. hewn stones, relics of columns, sarcophagi, and two ruins of large buildings, with an open and extensive prospect on every side (see also *Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 367 sqq.). *Jokneam*, near *Carmel*, was a Levitical town in the territory of Zebulun (chap. xix. 11, xxi. 34). *Van de Velde* and *Robinson* (Bibl. Res. p. 114) suppose that they have found it in Tell *Kaimôn*, on the eastern side of the Wady *el Milh*, at the north-west end of a chain of hills running towards the south-east; this Tell being 200 feet high, and occupying a very commanding situation, so that it governed the main pass on the western side of Esdraelon towards the southern plain. *Qaimôn* is the Arabic form of the ancient *Καμμωνά*, *Cimana*, which *Eusebius* and *Jerome* describe in the *Onom.* as being six Roman miles to the north of *Legio*, on the road to Ptolemais.—Ver. 23. *Dor:* see chap. xi. 2. *Gilgal:* the seat of the king of the *Goyim* (a proper name, as in Gen. xiv. 1), in all probability the same place as the *villa nomine Galgulis* mentioned in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Gelgel*) as being six Roman

miles to the north of Antipatris, which still exists in the Moslem village of *Jiljule* (now almost a ruin; see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 136), although this village is only two miles E.S.E. of Kefr Sâba, the ancient Antipatris (see *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 568–9). *Thirza*, the capital of the kings of Israel down to the time of Omri (1 Kings xiv. 17, xv. 21, 33, xvi. 6 sqq.), is probably the present Talluza, an elevated and beautifully situated place, of a considerable size, surrounded by large olive groves, two hours to the north of Shechem (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 302, and *Van de Velde*, ii. p. 294).

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## II.—DIVISION OF THE LAND OF CANAAN AMONG THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL.

### CHAP. XIII.–XXIV.

The distribution of the conquered land among the Israelites is introduced by the command of the Lord to Joshua to enter upon this work, now that he was old, although different portions of land were still unconquered (chap. xiii. 1–7); and to this there is appended a description of the land on the east of the Jordan which had already been conquered and divided among the two tribes and a half (chap. xiii. 8–33). The distribution of the land on this side among the nine tribes and a half is related in its historical order; so that not only are the territories assigned by lot to the different tribes described according to their respective boundaries and towns, but the historical circumstances connected with the division and allotting of the land are also introduced into the description. These historical accounts are so closely connected with the *geographical* descriptions of the territory belonging to the different tribes, that the latter alone will explain the course pursued in the distribution of the land, and the various ways in which the different territories are described (see the remarks on chap. xiv. 1). For example, in the account of the inheritance which fell to the lot of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, not only are the boundaries most carefully traced, but the towns are also enumerated one by one (chap. xv. and xviii. 11-28); whereas in the tribe of Joseph (Ephraim and half Manasseh) the list of the towns is altogether wanting (chap. xvi. and xvii.); and in the possessions of the other tribes, either towns alone are mentioned, as in the case of Simeon and Dan

(chap. xix. 1–9, 40–48), or the boundaries and towns are mixed up together, but both of them given incompletely, as in the case of Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali (chap. xix. 10–16, 17–23, 24–31, 32–39). This incompleteness, particularly in the territories of the tribes mentioned last, may be explained from the fact, that in northern Canaan there were still very many tracts of land in the hands of the Canaanites, and the Israelites had not acquired a sufficiently exact or complete knowledge of the country, either through Joshua's campaign in the north, or through the men who were sent out to survey the northern land before it was divided (chap. xviii. 4–9), to enable them to prepare a complete account of the boundaries and towns at the very outset. In the same way, too, we may explain the absence of the list of towns in the case of the tribes of Ephraim and half Manasseh,—namely, from the fact that a large portion of the territory assigned to the tribe of Joseph was still in the possession of the Canaanites (*vid.* chap. xvii. 14–18); whilst the omission of any account of the boundaries in the case of Simeon and Dan is attributable to the circumstance that the former received its inheritance within the tribe of Judah, and the latter between Judah and Ephraim, whilst the space left for the Danites was so small, that Ephraim and Judah had to give up to them some of the towns in their own territory. Thus the very inequality and incompleteness of the geographical accounts of the possessions of the different tribes decidedly favour the conclusion, that they are the very lists which were drawn up at the time when Joshua divided the land. There is nothing to preclude this supposition in the fact that several towns occur with different names, *e.g. Beth-shemesh* and *Ir-shemesh* (chap. xv. 10, xix. 41, xxi. 16), *Madmannah* and *Beth-marcaboth*, *Sansanna* and *Hazar-susa* (chap. xv. 31, xix. 5), *Shilchim* and *Sharuchen* (chap. xv. 32, xix. 6), *Remeth* and *Jarmuth* (chap. xix. 21, xxi. 29), or in other smaller differences. For variations of this kind may be sufficiently explained from the fact that such places were known by two different names, which could be used promiscuously; whilst in other cases the difference in the name amounts to nothing more than a different mode of writing or pronouncing it: *e.g. Kattah* and *Kartah* (chap. xix. 15, xxi. 34), *Eshtemoh* and *Eshtemoa* (chap. xv. 50, xxi. 14), *Baalah* and *Balah* (chap. xv. 29, xix. 3); or simply in the contraction of a composite name, such as *Ramoth* in Gilead for *Ramoth-mizpeh* (chap. xxi. 36, xiii. 26); *Bealoth* and *Baalath-beer* (chap. xv. 24, xix. 8), *Lebaoth* and *Beth-lebaoth* (chap. xv. 32, xix. 6), *Hammath*

and *Hammoth-dor* (chap. xix. 35, xxi. 32). If the author, on the other hand, had drawn from later sources, or had simply given the results of later surveys, as *Knobel* supposes, there can be no doubt that much greater uniformity would be found in the different lists.[1]

## COMMAND OF GOD TO DIVIDE THE LAND OF CANAAN. DESCRIPTION OF THE TERRITORY OF THE TWO TRIBES AND A HALF. —CHAP. XIII.

Vers. 1–14. INTRODUCTION TO THE DIVISION OF THE LAND. —Vers. 1–7. Command of the Lord to Joshua to distribute the land of Canaan by lot among the nine tribes and a half. Ver. 1 contains only the commencement of the divine command; the conclusion follows in ver. 7. Vers. 2–6 form a parenthesis of several clauses, defining the last clause of ver. 1 more fully. When Joshua had grown old, the Lord commanded him, as he was advanced in years, and there was still much land to be taken, to divide "*this land*," *i.e.* the whole of the land of Canaan, for an inheritance to

[1] The arguments employed by *Knobel* in support of his assertion, consist on the one hand of inconclusive and incorrect assertions, and are founded on the other hand upon arbitrary assumptions. In the first place, for example, he asserts that "a large number of towns are omitted from the lists, which were within the boundaries mentioned and were in existence in the very earliest times, viz. *in the south*, Tamar (Gen. xiv. 7), Arad (Num. xxi. 1), Atbach, Rachal, Aroer, and Siphamoth (1 Sam. xxx. 28 sqq.), Gerar (Gen. xx. 26); *in the Shephelah*, Gaza, Askalon, Gath, Ashdod, Jabne, and Joppa (see chap. xv. 45 sqq.); in *Benjamin*, Michmash and Nob (1 Sam. xiii. 2 sqq., xxii. 19); in the *north*, Aphek, Lassaron, Madon, Shimron-meron, and Merom (chap. xi. 5, xii. 18–20), as well as Meroz and Ajjalon (Judg. v. 23, xii. 12); and these with other places would assuredly not be wanting here, if Joshua and his associates had distributed the towns as well as the land, and furnished our author with the lists." But it would be difficult to bring forward the proofs of this, since *Knobel* himself acknowledges that there are gaps in the lists which have come down to us, some of which can be proved to be the fault of the copyists,—such, for example, as the want of a whole section after chap. xv. 19 and xxi. 35. Moreover, the Philistine towns of Ashdod and Gaza are really mentioned in chap. xv. 46, and the others at all events hinted at; whereas *Knobel* first of all arbitrarily rejects chap. xv. 45–47 from the text, in order that he may afterwards be able to speak of it as omitted. Again, with many of the places mentioned as omissions, such as Atbach, Rachal, Siphamoth, etc., it is very questionable whether they were towns at all in Joshua's time, or, at all events, such towns as we should expect to find mentioned. And lastly, not only are no catalogues of towns given at all in the case of Ephraim and Manasseh, but we have only imperfect catalogues in the case of Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali; and, as we

the nine tribes and a half, and promised him at the same time that He would drive out the Canaanites from those portions of the land that were not yet conquered (ver. 6). The words "*grown old and come into years*" (*vid.* Gen. xxiv. 1, xviii. 11, etc.) denote advanced age in its different stages up to the near approach of death (as, for example, in chap. xxiii. 1). Joshua might be ninety or a hundred years old at this time. The allusion to Joshua's great age serves simply to explain the reason for the command of God. As he was already old, and there still remained much land to be taken, he was to proceed to the division of Canaan, that he might accomplish this work to which he was also called before his death; whereas he might very possibly suppose that, under existing circumstances, the time for allotting the land had not yet arrived.—In vers. 2–6 the districts that were not yet conquered are enumerated separately. —Vers. 2, 3. All the *circles of the Philistines* (*geliloth*, circles of well-defined districts lying round the chief city). The reference is to the five towns of the Philistines, whose princes are mentioned in ver. 3. "*And all Geshuri:*" not the district of Geshur in Peræa

have already observed, this incompleteness and these gaps can be satisfactorily explained from the historical circumstances under which the allotment of the land took place. *Secondly*, *Knobel* also maintains, that "Joshua's conquests did not extend to the Lebanon (chap. xiii. 4, 5), and yet the author mentions towns of the Asherites there (chap. xix. 28, 30): Bethel was not taken till after the time of Joshua (Judg. i. 22 sqq.), and this was also the case with Jerusalem (Judg. i. 8), and in the earliest times of the judges they had no Hebrew inhabitants (Judg. xix. 12), yet the author speaks of both places as towns of the Benjamites (chap. xviii. 22, 28); Jericho and Ai were lying in ruins in Joshua's time (chap. vi. 24, viii. 28), yet they are spoken of here as towns of Benjamin that had been rebuilt (chap. xviii. 21, 23); it is just the same with Hazor in Naphtali (chap. xi. 13, xix. 36); and according to Judg. i. 1, 10 sqq., Hebron and Debir also were not conquered till after Joshua's time." But all this rests (1) upon the false assumption, that the only towns which Joshua distributed by lot among the tribes of Israel were those which he permanently conquered, whereas, according to the command of God, he divided the whole land among the Israelites, whether it was conquered or not; (2) upon the erroneous opinion, that the towns which had been destroyed, such as Jericho, Ai, and Hazor, were allotted to the Israelites as "rebuilt," whereas there is not a word about this in the text. It is just the same with the arguments used by *Knobel* in proof of the composition of chap. xiii.–xxi. from three different documents. The material discrepancies have been forced upon the text, as we shall see when we come to an explanation of the passages in question; and the verbal differences prove nothing more than that the geographical account of the boundaries and towns contains no allusion to the priesthood, to sacrifice, or to certain other things which no one would think of looking for here.

(vers. 11, 13, xii. 5; Deut. iii. 14), but the territory of the Geshurites, a small tribe in the south of Philistia, on the edge of the north-western portion of the Arabian desert which borders on Egypt; it is only mentioned again in 1 Sam. xxvii. 8. The land of the Philistines and Geshurites extended from the Sichor of Egypt (on the south) to the territory of Ekron (on the north). *Sichor* (*Sihor*), *lit.* the black river, is not the Nile, because this is always called הַיְאֹר (the river) in simple prose (Gen. xli. 1, 3; Ex. i. 22), and was not "before Egypt," *i.e.* to the east of it, but flowed through the middle of the land. The "*Sichor before Egypt*" was the brook (*nachal*) of Egypt, the Ῥινοκορούρα, the modern Wady *el Arish*, which is mentioned in chap. xv. 4, 47, etc., as the southern border of Canaan towards Egypt (see at Num. xxxiv. 5). *Ekron* (Ἀρραικών, LXX.), the most northerly of the five chief cities of the Philistines, was first of all allotted to the tribe of Judah (chap. xv. 11, 45), then on the further distribution it was given to Dan (chap. xix. 43); after Joshua's death it was conquered by Judah (Judg. i. 18), though it was not permanently occupied. It is the present Akîr, a considerable village in the plain, two hours to the south-west of Ramlah, and on the east of Jamnia, without ruins of any antiquity, with the exception of two old wells walled round, which probably belong to the times of the Crusaders (see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 23). "*To the Canaanites is reckoned* (the territory of the) *five lords of the Philistines*," *i.e.* it was reckoned as belonging to the land of Canaan, and allotted to the Israelites like all the rest. This remark was necessary, because the Philistines were not descendants of Canaan (see at Gen. x. 14), but yet were to be driven out like the Canaanites themselves as being invaders of Canaanitish territory (cf. Deut. ii. 23). סַרְנֵי, from סֶרֶן, the standing title of the princes of the Philistines (*vid.* Judg. iii. 3, xvi. 5 sqq.; 1 Sam. v. 8), does not mean kings, but princes, and is interchangeable with שָׂרִים (cf. 1 Sam. xxix. 6 with vers. 4, 9). At any rate, it was the native or Philistian title of the Philistine princes, though it is not derived from the same root as *Sar*, but is connected with *seren*, *axis rotæ*, in the tropical sense of *princeps*, for which the Arabic furnishes several analogies (see *Ges.* Thes. p. 972). The capitals of these five princes were the following. *Azzah* (*Gaza*, *i.e.* the strong): this was allotted to the tribe of Judah and taken by the Judæans (chap. xv. 47; Judg. i. 18), but was not held long. It is at the present time a considerable town of about 15,000 inhabitants, with the old name of *Ghazzeh*, about an hour from the sea, and with a

seaport called *Majuma;* it is the farthest town of Palestine towards the south-west (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 374 sqq.; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 35 sqq.; *Stark*, Gaza, etc., pp. 45 sqq.). *Ashdod* (Ἄζωτος, *Azotus*): this was also allotted to the tribe of Judah (chap. xv. 46, 47), the seat of Dagon-worship, to which the Philistines carried the ark (1 Sam. v. 1 sqq.). It was conquered by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), was afterwards taken by Tartan, the general of Sargon (Isa. xx. 1), and was besieged by Psammetichus for twenty-nine years (Herod. ii. 157). It is the present *Esdud*, a Mahometan village with about a hundred or a hundred and fifty miserable huts, upon a low, round, wooded height on the road from Jamnia to Gaza, two miles to the south of Jamnia, about half an hour from the sea (*vid. Rob.* i. p. 368). *Ashkalon:* this was conquered by the Judæans after the death of Joshua (Judg. i. 8, 9); but shortly afterwards recovered its independence (*vid.* Judg. xiv. 19; 1 Sam. vi. 17). It is the present *Askulân* on the sea-shore between Gaza and Ashdod, five hours to the north of Gaza, with considerable and widespread ruins (see *v. Raum.* pp. 173–4; *Ritter*, xvi. pp. 69 sqq.). *Gath* (Γέθ): this was for a long time the seat of the Rephaites, and was the home of Goliath (chap. xi. 22; 1 Sam. xvii. 4, 23; 2 Sam. xxi. 19 sqq.; 1 Chron. xx. 5 sqq.); it was thither that the Philistines of Ashdod removed the ark, which was taken thence to Ekron (1 Sam. v. 7–10). David was the first to wrest it from the Philistines (1 Chron. xviii. 1). In the time of Solomon it was a royal city of the Philistines, though no doubt under Israelitish supremacy (1 Kings ii. 39, v. 1). It was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 8), was taken by the Syrians in the time of Joash (2 Kings xii. 18), and was conquered again by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6; Amos vi. 2); but no further mention is made of it, and no traces have yet been discovered[1] (see *Rob.* ii. p. 420, and *v.*

[1] According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Geth*), it was a place five Roman miles from Eleutheropolis towards Diospolis, whereas Jerome (on Micah i.) says: "*Gath* was near the border of Judæa, and on the road from Eleutheropolis to Gaza; it is still a very large village;" whilst in the commentary on Jer. xxv. he says: "*Gath* was near to and conterminous with Azotus," from which it is obvious enough that the situation of the Philistine city of Gath was altogether unknown to the Fathers. *Hitzig* and *Knobel* suppose the Βαιτογάβρα of *Ptolemy* (v. 16, 6), *Betogabri* in *Tab. Peuting.* ix. *e.* (the Eleutheropolis of the Fathers, and the present *Beit Jibrin*, a very considerable ruin), to be the ancient Gath, but this opinion is only founded upon very questionable etymological combinations; whereas *Thenius* looks for it on the site of the present *Deir Dubban*, though without any tenable ground.

*Raumer*, Pal. pp. 191–2). "*And the Avvites* (Avvæans) *towards the south.*" Judging from Deut. ii. 23, the *Avvim* appear to have belonged to those tribes of the land who were already found there by the Canaanites, and whom the Philistines subdued and destroyed when they entered the country. They are not mentioned in Gen. x. 15–19 among the Canaanitish tribes. At the same time, there is not sufficient ground for identifying them with the Geshurites as *Ewald* does, or with the Anakites, as *Bertheau* has done. Moreover, it cannot be decided whether they were descendants of Ham or Shem (see *Stark*. Gaza, pp. 32 sqq.). מִתֵּימָן (*from*, or on, *the south*) at the commencement of ver. 4 should be attached to ver. 3, as it is in the Septuagint, Syriac, and Vulgate, and joined to הָעַוִּים (the Avvites). The Avvæans dwelt to the south of the Philistines, on the south-west of Gaza. It gives no sense to connect it with what follows, so as to read "*towards the south all the land of the Canaanites;*" for whatever land to the south of Gaza, or of the territory of the Philistines, was still inhabited by Canaanites, could not possibly be called "all the land of the Canaanites." If, however, we were disposed to adopt the opinion held by *Masius* and *Rosenmüller*, and understand these words as relating to the southern boundaries of Canaan, "the possessions of the king of Arad and the neighbouring petty kings who ruled in the southern extremity of Judæa down to the desert of Paran, Zin, Kadesh," etc., the fact that Arad and the adjoining districts are always reckoned as belonging to the Negeb would at once be decisive against it (compare chap. xv. 21 sqq. with chap. x. 40, xi. 16, also Num. xxi. 1). Moreover, according to chap. x. 40, 41, and xi. 16, 17, Joshua had smitten the whole of the south of Canaan from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza and taken it; so that nothing remained unconquered there, which could possibly have been mentioned in this passage as not yet taken by the Israelites. For the fact that the districts, which Joshua traversed so victoriously and took possession of, were not all permanently held by the Israelites, does not come into consideration here at all. If the author had thought of enumerating all these places, he would have had to include many other districts as well.

Beside the territory of the Philistines on the south-west, there still remained to be taken (vers. 4, 5) in the north, "*all the land of the Canaanites*," *i.e.* of the Phœnicians dwelling on the coast, and "*the caves which belonged to the Sidonians unto Aphek.*" *Mearah* (the cave) is the present *Mugr Jezzin*, *i.e.* cave of Jezzin, on the east of

Sidon, in a steep rocky wall of Lebanon, a hiding-place of the Druses at the present time (see at Num. xxxiv. 8; also *F. v. Richter*, Wallfahrten in Morgenland, p. 133). *Aphek*, or *Aphik*, was allotted to the tribe of Asher (chap. xix. 30; Judg. i. 31); it was called Ἄφακα by the Greeks; there was a temple of Venus there, which Constantine ordered to be destroyed, on account of the licentious nature of the worship (*Euseb.* Vita Const. iii. 55). It is the present *Afka*, a small village, but a place of rare beauty, upon a terrace of Lebanon, near the chief source of the river *Adonis* (*Nahr Ibrahim*), with ruins of an ancient temple in the neighbourhood, surrounded by groves of the most splendid walnut trees on the north-east of Beirut (see *O. F. v. Richter*, pp. 106–7; *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 663; and *V. de Velde*, Reise. ii. p. 398). "*To the territory of the Amorites:*" this is obscure. We cannot imagine the reference to be to the territory of Og of Bashan, which was formerly inhabited by Amorites, as that did not extend so far north; and the explanation given by *Knobel*, that farther north there were not Canaanites, but Amorites, who were of Semitic origin, rests upon hypotheses which cannot be historically sustained.—Ver. 5. There still remained to be taken (2) "*the land of the Giblites*," *i.e.* the territory of the population of *Gebal* (1 Kings v. 32; Ezek. xxvii. 9), the *Byblos* of the classics, on the Mediterranean Sea, to the north of Beirut, called *Jebail* by the Arabs, and according to *Edrisi* (*ed. Jaubert*, i. p. 356), "a pretty town on the sea-shore, enclosed in good walls, and surrounded by vineyards and extensive grounds planted with fruit trees" (see also *Abulfed.* Tab. Syr. p. 94). It is still a town with an old wall, some portions of which apparently belong to the time of the Crusades (see *Burckhardt*, Syr. p. 296, and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvii. pp. 60 sqq.).[1] "*And all Lebanon toward the sunrising:*" *i.e.* not Antilibanus (*Knobel*), but the Lebanon which is to the east of the territory of Gebal, "*from Baal-gad under Mount Hermon*," *i.e. Paneas Banjas* at the foot of Hermon (see at chap. xi. 17), "*unto the entering in to Hamath*," *i.e.* as far up as the territory of the kingdom of Hamath, with the capital of the same name on the Orontes (see at Num. xxxiv. 8). Lastly, there still remained (3) "*all the inhabitants of the mountains, from Lebanon to Misrephothmaim*," *i.e.* the promontory of *Nakura* (see at chap. xi. 8), namely "*all the Sidonians*," *i.e.* all the Phœnicians who dwelt from Lebanon southwards, from the boundary of the territory of Hamath down

[1] The evidence adduced by *Movers* (Phönizier, ii. 1, p. 103), that the Giblites did not belong to the Canaanites, has more plausibility than truth.

to the promontory of Nakura. According to ancient usage, the Sidonians stand for the Phœnicians generally, as in Homer, on account of Sidon being the oldest capital of Phœnicia (see *Ges.* on Is. i. pp. 724 sqq.). All these the Lord would root out before Israel, and therefore Joshua was to divide the whole of northern Canaan, which was inhabited by Phœnicians, among the Israelites. "*Only divide thou it by lot for an inheritance*," etc. רַק, only, *i.e.* although thou hast not yet taken it. הַפִּיל, to cause it to fall, here used with reference to the lot, *i.e.* to divide by lot. "Fulfil thy duty in the distribution of the land, not even excepting what is still in the firm grasp of the enemy; for I will take care to perform what I have promised. From this we may learn to rely so perfectly upon the word of God, when undertaking any duty, as not to be deterred by doubts or fears" (*Calvin*).

Vers. 8–14. To the command of God to divide the land on this side the Jordan among the nine tribes and a half (ver. 7), the historian appends the remark, that the other two tribes and a half had already received their inheritance from Moses on the other side (ver. 8). This he proceeds to describe in its full extent (vers. 9–13), and then observes that the tribe of Levi alone received no landed inheritance, according to the word of the Lord (ver. 14). After this he gives a description in vers. 15–33 of the land assigned by Moses to each of the two tribes and a half.[1] The remark in ver. 8 is so closely connected with what precedes by the expression "with whom" (*lit. with it*), that this expression must be taken as somewhat indefinite: "with whom," viz. with half Manasseh, really signifying with the *other* half of Manasseh, with which the Reubenites and Gadites had received their inheritance (see Num. xxxii. and Deut. iii. 8–17). The last words of ver. 8, "*as Moses the servant of Jehovah gave them*," are not a tautological repetition of the clause "which Moses gave them," but simply affirm that these tribes received the land given them by Moses, in the manner commanded by Moses, without any alteration in his arrangements. The boundaries of the land given in vers. 9–13 really agree with those given in chap. xii. 2–5 and Deut. iii. 8, although the expression

[1] *Knobel's* remark, that vers. 8–14 anticipate the following section (vers. 15–33) in an unsuitable manner, rests upon a thorough misunderstanding of the whole; for the account of the division of the land to the east of the Jordan among the two tribes and a half (vers. 15–33) could not be introduced in a more appropriate manner than by a description of the circumference of the land and of its principal parts (vers. 9–13).

varies in some respects. The words of ver. 9, "*the city that is in the midst of the river*," *i.e.* the city in the valley, viz. *Ar*, are more distinct than those of chap. xii. 2, "and from the middle of the river." "*All the plain*" is the Amoritish table-land, a tract of land for the most part destitute of trees, stretching from the Arnon to Heshbon, and towards the north-east to Rabbath-Ammân (see at Deut. iii. 10), which is called in Num. xxi. 20 the field of Moab. *Medeba*, now called *Medaba* (see at Num. xxi. 30). *Dibon*, now a ruin called *Dibân*, to the north of Arnon (see at Num. xxi. 20).—Ver. 10, as in chap. xii. 2.—Ver. 11. *Gilead* is the whole country of that name on both sides of the Jabbok (see at chap. xii. 2 and Deut. iii. 10), the present Belka and Jebel Ajlun, for the description of which see the remarks at Num. xxxii. 1. "*The territory of the Geshurites and Maachathites*" is referred to in chap. xii. 5 as the boundary of the kingdom of Og, and in Deut. iii. 14 as the boundary of the land which was taken by Jair the Manassite; here it is included in the inheritance of the tribes on the other side of the Jordan, but it was never really taken possession of by the Israelites, and (according to ver. 13) it had probably never been really subject to king Og. The other notices in vers. 11 and 12 are the same as in chap. xii. 4, 5.—Ver. 14. The tribe of Levi was to receive no land, but the firings of Jehovah, *i.e.* the offerings, including the tithes and first-fruits (Lev. xxvii. 30–32, compared with Num. xviii. 21–32), were to be its inheritance; so that the God of Israel himself is called the inheritance of Levi in ver. 33 as in Num. xviii. 20, to which the words "as He said unto them" refer (see the commentary on Num. xviii. 20).

Vers. 15–33. THE POSSESSIONS OF THE TWO TRIBES AND A HALF.—Vers. 15–23. The tribe of *Reuben* received its inheritance in the south—namely, the territory from Aroër in the Arnon valley, and from Ar in that valley, onwards, and the plain (table-land) by Medeba (see ver. 9), with Heshbon the capital and her towns, *i.e.* the towns dependent upon it, in the plain. *Heshbon*, almost in the centre between the Arnon and the Jabbok, was situated upon the border of the inheritance of the Reubenites, and was ceded to the Gadites, who gave it up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 39; 1 Chron. vi. 66: see at Num. xxxii. 37). *Dibon*, called Dibon of Gad in Num. xxxiii. 45, because the Gadites had built, *i.e.* fortified it, was on the south of Heshbon, only an hour from Aroër, on the Arnon (ver. 9). *Bamoth-baal*, also called Bamoth simply (Num. xxi. 20; Isa. xv. 2),

is to be sought for on the Jebel Attarus (see at Num. xxi. 20). It was thence that Balaam saw the end of the Israelitish camp (Num. xxii. 41). *Bethbaal-meon*, the present ruin of *Myun*, three-quarters of an hour S.E. of Heshbon (see at Num. xxxii. 38). *Jahza*, where Sihon was defeated, was to the east of Medeba, according to the *Onom.*; and Dibon was on the border of the desert (see at Num. xxi. 23). *Kedemoth*, on the border of the desert, to the north-west of Kalaat Balua, is to be sought on the northern bank of the Balua, or upper Arnon (see at Num. xxi. 13). *Mephaath*, where there was a garrison stationed (according to the *Onom.*) as a defence against the inhabitants of the desert, is to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Jahza, with which it is always associated (Jer. xlviii. 21). Kedemoth and Mephaath were given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 37; 1 Chron. vi. 64).—Vers. 19, 20. *Kirjathaim*, where Chedorlaomer defeated the Emim, is probably to be found in the ruins of *et-Teym*, half an hour to the west of Medaba (see at Gen. xiv. 5). *Sibmah* (Num. xxxii. 38), according to *Jerome* (on Isa. xvi. 8), only 500 paces from Heshbon, appears to have hopelessly disappeared. *Zereth-hashachar, i.e. splendor aurorœ*, which is only mentioned here, was situated "*upon a mountain of the valley.*" According to ver. 27, the valley was the Jordan valley, or rather (according to Gen. xiv. 3, 8) the vale of Siddim, a valley running down on the eastern side of the Dead Sea. *Seetzen* conjectures that the town referred to is the present ruin of *Sará*, on the south of Zerka Maein.—*Beth-peor*, opposite to Jericho, six Roman miles higher than (to the east of) *Libias*: see at Num. xxiii. 28. The "*slopes of Pisgah*" (chap. xii. 3; Deut. iii. 17): to the south of the former, on the north-eastern shore of the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxvii. 12). *Beth-jeshimoth* (chap. xii. 3), in the Ghor el Seisabân, on the north-east side of the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxii. 1). In ver. 21*a*, the places which Reuben received in addition to those mentioned by name are all summed up in the words, "*and all the* (other) *towns of the plain, and all the kingdom of Sihon*," *sc.* so far as it extended over the plain. These limitations of the words are implied in the context: the first in the fact that towns in the plain are mentioned in ver. 17; the second in the fact that, according to ver. 27, "the rest of the kingdom of Sihon," *i.e.* the northern portion of it, was given to the Gadites. The allusion to Sihon induced the author to mention his defeat again; see at Num. xxxi., where the five Midianitish vassals who were slain with Sihon are noticed in ver. 8, and the death of Balaam is also mentioned.

"*Dukes of Sihon*," properly vassals of Sihon; נְסִיכִים does not signify anointed, however, but means literally poured out, *i.e.* cast, moulded, enfeoffed. The word points to the "creation of a prince by the communication or pouring in of power" (*Gusset. s. v.*).—Ver. 23. "*And* (this) *was the boundary of the sons of Reuben, the Jordan and its territory*," *i.e.* the Jordan, or rather land adjoining it. The meaning is, that the territory of Reuben, viz. with the places mentioned last (ver. 20), reached to the territory of the Jordan; for so far as the principal part was concerned, it was on the east of the Dead Sea, as it only reached from the Arnon to Heshbon, *i.e.* up to the latitude of the northern extremity of the Dead Sea. "*The towns and their villages.*" חָצֵר, farm premises, used, as in Lev. xxv. 31, to denote places not enclosed by a wall.

Vers. 24–28. Inheritance of the tribe of *Gad.*—This tribe received *Jaëzer* (probably *es Szyr:* see at Num. xxi. 32) and "*all the towns of Gilead*," *i.e.* of the southern half of Gilead, which belonged to the kingdom of Sihon; for the northern half, which belonged to the kingdom of Og, was given to the Manassites (ver. 31), "*and the half of the land of the sons of Ammon, to Aroër before Rabbah*," *i.e.* that portion of the land of the Ammonites between the Arnon and the Jabbok, which the Amorites under Sihon had taken from the Ammonites, namely, the land on the east of Gilead, on the western side of the upper Jabbok (Nahr Ammân: Deut. ii. 37, iii. 16; cf. Judg. xi. 13); for the land of the Ammonites, *i.e.* the land which they still held in the time of Moses, on the eastern side of Nahr Ammân, the Israelites were not allowed to attack (Deut. ii. 19). *Aroër* before Rabbah, *i.e.* Ammân (see Deut. iii. 11), is Aroër of Gad, and must be distinguished from Aroër of Reuben on the Arnon (ver. 16). It is only mentioned again in Judg. xi. 33 and 2 Sam. xxiv. 5, and was situated, according to 2 Sam., in the valley of Gad, that is to say, in a wady or valley through which *Gesenius* supposes an arm of the Jabbok to have flowed, and *Thenius* the Jabbok itself, though neither of them has sufficient ground for his conjecture. It is also not to be identified with the ruin of *Ayra* to the south-west of Szalt, as this is not in a wady at all; but in all probability it is to be sought for to the north-east of Rabbah, in the Wady Nahr Ammân, on the side of the Kalat *Zerka Gadda*, the situation of which suits this verse and 2 Sam. xxiv. 5 very well, and may easily be reconciled with Judg. xi. 33.—In ver. 26 the extent of the territory of Gad is first of all described from north to south: viz. from Heshbon (see ver. 17)

to *Ramath-mizpeh*, or *Ramoth* in Gilead (chap. xx. 8), probably on the site of the present *Szalt* (see at Deut. iv. 43), "*and Betonim*," probably the ruin of *Batneh*, on the mountains which bound the Ghor towards the east between the Wady Shaib and Wady Ajlun, in the same latitude as Szalt (*V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 298); and then, *secondly*, the northern boundary is described from west to east, "*from Mahanaim to the territory of Lidbir.*" *Mahanaim* (double-camp: Gen. xxxii. 2), which was given up by Gad to the Levites (chap. xxi. 30), in which Ishbosheth was proclaimed king (2 Sam. ii. 8, 9), and to which David fled from Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 24, 27; 1 Kings ii. 8), is not to be sought for, as *Knobel* supposes, in the ruins of *Meysera*, to the south of Jabbok, four hours and a half from Szalt, but was on the north of the Jabbok, since Jacob did not cross the ford of the Jabbok till after the angel had appeared to him at Mahanaim (Gen. xxxii. 3, 23). It was in or by the valley of the Jordan (according to 2 Sam. xviii. 23, 24), and has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Mahneh*, the situation of which, however, has not yet been determined (see at Gen. xxxii. 3). *Lidbir* is quite unknown; the *lamed*, however, is not to be taken as a prefix, but forms part of the word. *J. D. Michaelis* and *Knobel* suppose it to be the same as *Lo-debar* in 2 Sam. ix. 4, 5, xvii. 27, a place from which provisions were brought to David at Mahanaim on his flight from Absalom, and which is to be sought for on the east of Mahanaim.—Ver. 27. On the north, the territory of Gad seems to have extended to the Jabbok, and only to have stretched beyond the Jabbok at Mahanaim, which formed the boundary of half-Manasseh, according to ver. 30. In the valley of the Jordan, on the other hand, the boundary reached to the Sea of Galilee. "*The valley*" is the valley of the Jordan, or the Arabah from Wady Hesbân above the Dead Sea up to the Sea of Galilee, along the east side of the Jordan, which belonged to the kingdom of Sihon (chap. xii. 3; Deut. iii. 17). The northern boundary of the tribe of Reuben must have touched the Jordan in the neighbourhood of the Wady Hesbân. In the Jordan valley were *Beth-haram*, the future *Libias*, and present *er Rameh* (see at Num. xxxii. 36); *Beth-nimra*, according to the *Onom.* five Roman miles to the north, the present ruin of *Nimrein* (see at Num. xxxii. 36); *Succoth*, according to the *Onom. trans Jordanem in parte Scythopoleos* (see at Gen. xxxiii. 17); *Zaphon* (*i.e.* north), probably not far from the southern extremity of the Sea of Galilee. "*The rest of the kingdom of Sihon*," the other part having been given to the Reubenites (ver. 21).

Vers. 29–31. The territory of the *half tribe of Manasseh* extended from Mahanaim onwards, and embraced all Bashan, with the sixty Jair towns and the (northern) half of Gilead (see the comm. on Deut. iii. 13–15).—Ver. 32 is the concluding formula. (For the fact itself, see Num. xxxiv. 14, 15.)—Ver. 33 is a repetition of ver. 14.

## COMMENCEMENT OF THE DIVISION OF THE LAND OF CANAAN. INHERITANCE OF CALEB.—CHAP. XIV.

Vers. 1–5 form the heading and introduction to the account of the division of the land among the nine tribes and a half, which reaches to chap. xix., and is brought to a close by the concluding formula in chap. xix. 51. The division of the land of Canaan according to the boundaries laid down in Num. xxxiv. 2–12 was carried out, in accordance with the instructions in Num. xxxiv. 16–29, by the high priest Eleazar, Joshua, and ten heads of fathers' houses of the nine tribes and a half, whose names are given in Num. xxxiv. 18–28. "*By the lot of their inheritance,*" *i.e.* by casting lots for it: this is dependent upon the previous clause, "*which they distributed for inheritance to them.*" "*As the Lord commanded through Moses*" (Num. xxvi. 52–56, xxxiii. 54, and xxxiv. 13), "*to the nine tribes and a half*" (this is also dependent upon the clause "which they distributed for inheritance").—Vers. 3, 4. So many tribes were to receive their inheritance, for the two tribes and a half had already received theirs from Moses on the other side of the Jordan, and the tribe of Levi was not to receive any land for an inheritance. According to this, there seem to be only eight tribes and a half to be provided for ($2\frac{1}{2}+1+8\frac{1}{2}=12$); but there were really nine and a half, for the sons of Joseph formed two tribes in consequence of the adoption of Ephraim and Manasseh by the patriarch Jacob (Gen. xlviii. 5). But although the Levites were to have no share in the land, they were to receive towns to dwell in, with pasture adjoining for their cattle; these the other tribes were to give up to them out of their inheritance, according to the instructions in Num. xxxv. 1–8 (see the notes upon this passage).

So far as the division of the land itself was concerned, it was to be distributed by lot, according to Num. xxvi. 52 sqq.; but, at the same time, the distribution was carried out with such special regard to the relative sizes of the different tribes, that the more numerous tribe received a larger share of the land than one that was not so

numerous. This could only be accomplished, however, by their restricting the lot to the discrimination of the relative situation of the different tribes, and then deciding the extent and boundaries of their respective possessions according to the number of families of which they were composed.[1] The casting of the lots was probably effected, as the Rabbins assumed, by means of two urns, one filled with slips having the names of the tribes upon them; the other, with an equal number, representing separate divisions of the land: so that when one slip, with a name upon it, was taken out of one urn, another slip, with a division of the land upon it, was taken from the other. The result of the lot was accepted as the direct decree of God; "for the lot was not controlled in any way by the opinion, or decision, or authority of men" (*Calvin*). See the fuller remarks at Num. xxvi. 56. In the account of the casting of the lots, the first fact which strikes us is, that after the tribes of Judah and Joseph had received their inheritance, an interruption took place, and the camp was moved from Gilgal to Shiloh, and the tabernacle erected there (chap. xviii. 1–9); after which the other tribes manifested so little desire to receive their inheritance, that Joshua reproved them for their indolence (chap. xviii. 3), and directed them to nominate a committee of twenty-one from their own number, whom he sent out to survey the land and divide it into seven parts; and it was not till after this had been done that the casting of the lots was proceeded with, and each of these seven tribes received its inheritance. The reason for this interruption is not given; and the commentators have differed in their opinions as to the cause (see *Keil's* former Comm. on Joshua, pp. 347 sqq.). The following appears to be the most probable supposition. When Joshua received the command from the Lord to divide the land among the tribes, they made an approximative division of the land into nine or ten parts, according to the general idea of its extent and principal features, which they had obtained in connection with the conquest

[1] "This was the force of the lot: there were ten lots cast in such a manner as to decide that some were to be next to the Egyptians, some to have the sea-coasts, some to occupy the higher ground, and some to settle in the valleys. When this was done, it remained for the heads of the nation to determine the boundaries of their different territories according to some equitable standard. It was their place, therefore, to ascertain how many thousand heads there were in each tribe, and then to adjudicate a larger or smaller space according to the size of the tribe" (*Calvin*). Or, as *Clericus* observes (Num. xxvi. 52), "the lot seems to have had respect to the situation alone, and not to the extent of territory at all."

of the country, and then commenced distributing it without any more minute survey or more accurate measurement, simply fixing the boundaries of those districts which came out first according to the size of the tribes upon whom the lots fell. As soon as that was done, these tribes began to move off into the territory allotted to them, and to take possession of it. The exact delineation of the boundaries, however, could not be effected at once, but required a longer time, and was probably not finally settled till the tribe had taken possession of its land. In this manner the tribes of Judah, Ephraim, and half Manasseh had received their inheritance one after another. And whilst they were engaged in taking possession, *Shiloh* was chosen, no doubt in accordance with divine instructions, as the place where the tabernacle was to be permanently erected; and there the sanctuary was set up, the whole camp, of course, removing thither at the same time. But when the casting of the lots was about to be continued for the remainder of the tribes, they showed no great desire for fixed abodes, as they had become so accustomed to a nomad life, through having been brought up in the desert, that they were much more disposed to continue it, than to take possession of a circumscribed inheritance,—a task which would require more courage and exertion, on account of the remaining Canaanites, than a life in tents, in which they might wander up and down in the land by the side of the Canaanites, and supply their wants from its productions, as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had formerly done, since the Canaanites who were left were so weakened by the war that the Israelites had no occasion for a moment's anxiety about them, provided they did not attempt to expel or to exterminate them. But Joshua could not rest contented with this, if he would remain faithful to the charge which he had received from the Lord. He therefore reproved these tribes for their tardiness, and commanded them to take steps for continuing the casting of lots for the land. But as the tribe of Joseph had expressed its dissatisfaction with the smallness of the inheritance allotted to it, and by so doing had manifested its cowardice, which prevented it from attacking the Canaanites who were still left in the territory that had fallen to their lot, Joshua may possibly have had his eyes opened in consequence to the fact that, if the casting of lots was continued in the manner begun, and with nothing more than an approximative definition of the different portions of the land, there was a possibility of still greater dissatisfaction arising among the other tribes, since some of them at any rate would be sure to receive

portions of the land in which the Canaanites were more numerous and still stronger than in the possessions of Ephraim. He therefore gave orders, that before the casting of lots was proceeded with any further, the rest of the land should be carefully surveyed and divided into seven districts, and that a statement of the result should be laid before him, that these seven districts might be divided by lot among the seven tribes. This survey of the land no doubt very clearly showed that what remained, after deducting the possessions of Judah and Joseph, was too small for the remaining seven tribes, in proportion to what had been already divided. Moreover, it had also been discovered that Judah's share was larger than this tribe required (chap. xix. 9). Consequently it was necessary that certain partial alterations should be made in the arrangements connected with the first division. The lot itself could not be pronounced invalid when it had once been cast, as its falling was regarded as the decision of God himself, and therefore it was impossible to make a fresh division of the *whole* land among all the tribes. The only thing that could be done was to leave the two tribes in those districts which had fallen to them by lot (chap. xviii. 5), but to take certain parts of their territory for the other tribes, which would leave the lot in all its integrity, as the lot itself had not determined either the size or the boundaries. This will serve to explain both the interruption to the casting of the lots, which had been commenced at Gilgal, and also the peculiar manner in which it was continued at Shiloh.

Vers. 6–15. CALEB'S INHERITANCE.—Vers. 6 sqq. Before the casting of the lots commenced, Caleb came to Joshua along with the sons of Judah, and asked for the mountains of Hebron for his possession, appealing at the same time to the fact, that forty-five years before Moses had promised it to him on oath, because he had not discouraged the people and stirred them up to rebellion, as the other spies that were sent from Kadesh to Canaan had done, but had faithfully followed the Lord.[1] This occurred at Gilgal, where

[1] The grounds upon which *Knobel* follows *Maurer* and others in affirming that this account does not belong to the so-called Elohist, but is merely a fragment taken from the first document of the Jehovist, are formed partly from misinterpretations of particular verses and partly from baseless assumptions. To the former belongs the assertion, that, according to vers. 8, 12, Joshua was not one of the spies (see the remarks on ver. 8); to the latter the assertion, that the Elohist does not represent Joshua as dividing the land, or Caleb as receiving so large a territory (see on the contrary, however, the

the casting of the lots was to take place. *Caleb* was not "the head of the Judahites," as *Knobel* maintains, but simply the head of a father's house of Judah, and, as we may infer from his surname, "the Kenizzite" or descendant of Kenaz ("*the Kenizzite*" here and Num. xxxii. 12 is equivalent to "son of Kenaz," ch. xv. 17, and Judg. i. 13), head of the father's house which sprang from *Kenaz*, *i.e.* of a subdivision of the Judahite family of Hezron; for Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel and father of Achzah, according to 1 Chron. ii. 42 (cf. 1 Chron. ii. 49), was the same person as Caleb the descendant of Hezron mentioned in 1 Chron. ii. 18. From the surname "the Kenizzite" we are of course not to understand that Caleb or his father Jephunneh is described as a descendant of the Canaanitish tribe of Kenizzites (Gen. xv. 19); but *Kenaz* was a descendant of Hezron, the son of Perez and grandson of Judah (1 Chron. ii. 5, 18, 25), of whom nothing further is known. Consequently it was not the name of a tribe, but of a person, and, as we may see from 1 Chron. iv. 15, where one of the sons of Caleb is called Kenaz, the name was repeated in the family. The sons of Judah who came to Joshua along with Caleb were not the Judahites generally, therefore, or representatives of all the families of Judah, but simply members or representatives of the father's house of Judah which took its name from Kenaz, and of which Caleb was the head at that time. Caleb reminded Joshua of the word which the Lord had spoken concerning them in Kadesh-barnea, *i.e.* of the promise of God that they should both of them enter the land of Canaan (Num. xiv. 24, 30), and then proceeded to observe (ver. 7): "*When I was forty years old, and was sent by Moses as a spy to Canaan, I brought back an answer as it was in my mind*," *i.e.* according to the best of my convictions, without fear of man or regard to the favour of the people.—Ver. 8. Whereas the other spies discouraged the people by exaggerated reports concerning the inhabitants of Canaan, he had followed the Lord with perfect fidelity (Num. xiii. 31–33). He had not been made to waver in his faithfulness to the Lord and His promises either by the evil reports which the other spies had brought of the land, or by the murmuring and threats of the excited crowd (see Num. xiv. 6–10). "*My brethren*" (ver. 8) are the rest of the spies, of course with the exception of Joshua, to whom Caleb was speaking.[1] הֶמְסִיו,

exposition of ver. 13), as well as the enumeration of all kinds of words which are said to be foreign to the Elohistic document.

[1] That Joshua was not included was evident from this circumstance alone,

for הִמַּסּוּ (see *Ges.* § 75, anm. 17, and *Ewald*, § 142, *a.*), from מָסָּה = מָסַס (see chap. ii. 11).—Ver. 9. Jehovah swore at that time, that the land upon which his (Caleb's) foot had trodden should be an inheritance for him and his sons for ever. This oath is not mentioned in Num. xiv. 20 sqq., nor yet in Deut. i. 35, 36, where Moses repeats the account of the whole occurrence to the people. For the oath of Jehovah mentioned in Num. xiv. 21, 24, viz. that none of the murmuring people should see the land of Canaan, but that Caleb alone should come thither and his seed should possess it, cannot be the one referred to, as the promise given to Caleb in this oath does not relate to the possession of Hebron in particular, but to the land of Canaan generally, "*the land which Jehovah had sworn to their fathers.*" We must assume, therefore, that in addition to what is mentioned in Num. xiv. 24, God gave a special promise to Caleb, which is passed over there, with reference to the possession of Hebron itself, and that Joshua, who heard it at the time, is here reminded of that promise by Caleb. This particular promise from God was closely related to the words with which Caleb endeavoured to calm the minds of the people when they rose up against Moses (Num. xiii. 30), viz. by saying to them, "We are well able to overcome it," notwithstanding the Anakites who dwelt in Hebron and had filled the other spies with such great alarm on account of their gigantic size. With reference to this the Lord had promised that very land to Caleb for his inheritance. Upon this promise Caleb founded his request (vers. 10–12) that Joshua would give him these mountains, of which Joshua had heard at that time that there were Anakites and large fortified cities there, inasmuch as, although forty-five years had elapsed since God had spoken these words, and he was now eighty-five years old, he was quite as strong as he had been then. From the words, "The Lord hath kept me alive these forty-five years," *Theodoret* justly infers, that the conquest of Canaan by Joshua was completed in seven years, since God spake these words towards the end of the second year after the exodus from Egypt, and therefore thirty-eight years before the entrance into Canaan. The clause אֲשֶׁר הָלַךְ וגו׳ (ver. 10)

and consequently it is a complete perversion on the part of *Knobel* to argue, that because the expression is a general one, *i.e.* because Joshua is not expressly excepted by name, therefore he cannot have been one of the spies, not to mention the fact that the words "concerning me *and thee*," in ver. 6, are sufficient to show to any one acquainted with the account in Num. xiii., xiv., that Joshua was really one of them.

is also dependent upon זֶה אַרְבָּעִים וגו׳: viz. "*these forty-five years that Israel has wandered in the desert*" (on this use of אֲשֶׁר, see *Ewald*, § 331, *c.*). The expression is a general one, and the years occupied in the conquest of Canaan, during which Israel had not yet entered into peaceful possession of the promised land, are reckoned as forming part of the years of wandering in the desert. As another reason for his request, Caleb adds in ver. 11: "*I am still as strong to-day as at that time; as my strength was then, so is it now for war, and to go out and in*" (see Num. xxvii. 17).—Ver. 12. "*The mountain,*" according to the context, is the mountainous region of Hebron, where the spies had seen the Anakites (Num. xiii. 22, 28). The two clauses, in ver. 12, beginning with כִּי are not to be construed as subordinate to one another, but are co-ordinate clauses, and contain two distinct motives in support of his petition: viz. "*for thou heardest in that day,*" *sc.* what Jehovah said to me then, and also "*for* (because) *the Anakites are there;*" . . . "*perhaps Jehovah is with me* (אִתִּי for אֶתִּי, see *Ges.* § 103, 1, anm. 1, and *Ewald*, § 264, *b.*), *and I root them out*" (*vid.* chap. xv. 14). The word "perhaps" does not express a doubt, but a hope or desire, or else, as *Masius* says, "hope mixed with difficulty; and whilst the difficulty detracts from the value, the hope stimulates the desire for the gift."—Ver. 13. Then Joshua blessed Caleb, *i.e.* implored the blessing of God upon his undertaking, and gave him Hebron for an inheritance. Hebron is mentioned as the chief city, to which the surrounding country belonged; for Caleb had asked for the mountains (ver. 9), *i.e.* the mountainous country with and around Hebron, which included, for example, the fortified town of Debir also (chap. xv. 15).—Ver. 14. This inheritance, the historian adds, was awarded to Caleb because he had followed the God of Israel with such fidelity.—In ver. 15 there follows another notice of the earlier name of Hebron (see at Gen. xxiii. 2). The expression לְפָנִים (before), like the words "to this day," applies to the time when the book was composed, at which time the name *Kirjath-arba* had long since fallen into disuse; so that it by no means follows that the name Hebron was not so old as the name Kirjath-arba, which was given to Hebron for the first time when it was taken by Arba, "the great man among the Anakites," *i.e.* the strongest and most renowned of the Anakites (*vid.* chap. xv. 13). The remark, "*and the land had rest from war,*" is repeated again at the close of this account from chap. xi. 23, to show that although there were Anakites still dwelling in Hebron whom Caleb

hoped to exterminate, the work of distributing the land by lot was not delayed in consequence, but was carried out in perfect peace.

### INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF JUDAH.—CHAP. XV.

Under the superintending providence of God, the inheritance which fell to the tribe of Judah by lot was in the southern part of Canaan, where Caleb had already received his inheritance, so that he was not separated from his tribe. The inheritance of Judah is first of all described according to its boundaries (vers. 1–12); then for the sake of completeness it is stated once more with regard to Caleb, that he received Kirjath-arba for his inheritance, and took possession of it by expelling the Anakites and conquering Debir (vers. 13–20); and after this a list is given of the towns in the different parts (vers. 21–63).

Vers. 1–12.—*Boundaries of the inheritance of the tribe of Judah.* —Ver. 1. Its situation in the land. "*And there was* (*i.e.* fell, or came out; cf. chap. xvi. 1, xix. 1) *the lot to the tribe of Judah according to its families to the frontier of Edom* (see at Num. xxxiv. 3), *to the desert of Zin southward, against the extreme south*" (*lit.* from the end or extremity of the south), *i.e.* its inheritance fell to it, so that it reached to the territory of Edom and the desert of Zin, in which Kadesh was situated (see at Num. xiii. 21), on the extreme south of Canaan.—Vers. 2–4. *The southern boundary.* This was also the southern boundary of the land of Israel generally, and coincided with the southern boundary of Canaan as described in Num. xxxiv. 3–5. It went out "*from the end of the salt sea, namely, from the tongue which turneth to the south,*" *i.e.* from the southern point of the Dead Sea, which is now a salt marsh.—Vers. 3, 4. Thence it proceeded "*to the southern boundary of the ascent of Akrabbim,*" *i.e.* the row of lofty whitish cliffs which intersects the Arabah about eight miles below the Dead Sea (see at Num. xxxiv. 4), "*and passed across to Zin,*" *i.e.* the Wady *Murreh* (see at Num. xiii. 21), "*and went up to the south of Kadesh-barnea,*" *i.e.* by *Ain Kudes* (see at Num. xx. 16), "*and passed over to Hezron, and went up to Adar, and turned to Karkaa, and went over to Azmon, and went out into the brook of Egypt,*" *i.e.* the Wady *el Arish.* On the probable situation of *Hezron, Adar, Karkaa,* and *Azmon,* see at Num. xxxiv. 4, 5. "*And the outgoings of the boundary were to the sea*" (the Mediterranean). The Wady el Arish, a marked boundary, takes first of all a northerly and then a north-

westerly course, and opens into the Mediterranean Sea (see Pent. vol. ii. p. 58). הָיָה in the singular before the subject in the plural must not be interfered with (see *Ewald*, § 316, *a.*).—The words "*this shall be your south coast*" point back to the southern boundary of Canaan as laid down in Num. xxxiv. 2 sqq., and show that the southern boundary of the tribe-territory of Judah was also the southern boundary of the land to be taken by Israel.—Ver. 5*a*. "*The eastern boundary was the salt sea to the end of the Jordan*," *i.e.* the Dead Sea, in all its length up to the point where the Jordan entered it.

In vers. 5*b*–11 we have a description of the *northern* boundary, which is repeated in chap. xviii. 15–19 as the southern boundary of Benjamin, though in the opposite direction, namely, from west to east. It started "*from the tongue of the* (salt) *sea, the end* (*i.e.* the mouth) *of the Jordan, and went up to Beth-hagla*,"—a border town between Judah and Benjamin, which was afterwards allotted to the latter (chap. xviii. 19, 21), the present *Ain Hajla*, an hour and a quarter to the south-east of *Riha* (Jericho), and three-quarters of an hour from the Jordan (see at Gen. l. 11, note),—"*and went over to the north side of Beth-arabah*," a town in the desert of Judah (ver. 61), afterwards assigned to Benjamin (chap. xviii. 22), and called *Ha-arabah* in chap. xviii. 18, about twenty or thirty minutes to the south-west of *Ain Hajla*, in a "level and barren steppe" (*Seetzen*, R. ii. p. 302), with which the name very well agrees (see also *Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 268 sqq.). "*And the border went up to the stone of Bohan, the son of Reuben*." The expression "went up" shows that the stone of *Bohan* must have been on higher ground, *i.e.* near the western mountains, though the opposite expression "went down" in chap. xviii. 17 shows that it must have been by the side of the mountain, and not upon the top. According to chap. xviii. 18, 19, the border went over from the stone of Bohan in an easterly direction "*to the shoulder over against* (Beth) *Arabah northwards, and went down to* (Beth) *Arabah, and then went over to the shoulder of Beth-hagla northwards*," *i.e.* on the north side of the mountain ridge of Beth-arabah and Beth-hagla. This ridge is "the chain of hills or downs which runs from *Kasr Hajla* towards the south to the north side of the Dead Sea, and is called *Katar Hhadije*, *i.e.* a row of camels harnessed together."—Ver. 7. The boundary ascended still farther to *Debir* from the valley of *Achor*. *Debir* is no doubt to be sought for by the Wady *Daber*, which runs down from the mountains to the Dead Sea

to the south of *Kasr Hajla*, possibly not far from the rocky grotto called *Choret ed Daber*, between the Wady *es Sidr* and the Khan *Chadrur* on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, about half-way between the two. On the valley of *Achor* see at chap. vii. 24. Then "*it turned northwards to Gilgal, opposite to the ascent of Adummim south of the brook.*" *Gilgal*, which must not be confounded, as it is by *Knobel*, with the first encampment of the Israelites in Canaan, viz. the *Gilgal* between Jericho and the Jordan, is called *Geliloth* in chap. xviii. 17. The situation of this place, which is only mentioned again in Judg. iii. 19, and was certainly not a town, probably only a village or farm, is defined more precisely by the clause "*opposite to the ascent of Adummim.*" *Maaleh Adummim*, which is correctly explained in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Adommim*) as *ἀνάβασις πύῤῥων, ascensus rufforum*, "was formerly a small villa, but is now a heap of ruins, which is called even to the present day *Maledomim*—on the road from Ælia to Jericho" (*Tobler*). It is mentioned by ancient travellers as an inn called *a terra ruffa, i.e.* "the red earth;" *terra russo*, or "the red house." By later travellers it is described as a small place named *Adomim*, being still called "the red field, because this is the colour of the ground; with a large square building like a monastery still standing there, which was in fact at one time a fortified monastery, though it is deserted now" (*Arvieux*, Merk. Nachr. ii. p. 154). It is the present ruin of *Kalaat el Dem*, to the north of the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, or *Kalaat ed Domm*, near the Khan *Chadrur*. *Gilgal*, or *Geliloth* (circle), was probably the "small round valley" or "field of *Adommim*," of which *Pococke* speaks as being at the foot of the hill on which the deserted inn was standing (viz. *ed Domm;* see *Pococke*, Reise ins Morgenland, ii. p. 46). The valley (*nachal*, rendered *river*) to the south of which Gilgal or the ascent of Adummim lay, and which was therefore to the north of these places, may possibly be the Wady *Kelt*, or the brook of Jericho in the upper part of its course, as we have only to go a quarter or half an hour to the east of Khan Chadrur, when a wide and splendid prospect opens towards the south across the Wady Kelt as far as Taiyibeh; and according to *Van de Velde's* map, a brook-valley runs in a northerly direction to the Wady Kelt on the north-east of Kalaat *ed Dem*. It is probable, however, that the reference is to some other valley, of which there are a great many in the neighbourhood. The boundary then passed over to the water of *En Shemesh* (sun-fountain), *i.e.* the present Apostle's Well, *Ain el Hodh*

or *Bir el Khôt*, below Bethany, and on the road to Jericho (*Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 398, 400; *Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 310), and then ran out at the fountain of *Rogel* (the spies), the present deep and copious *fountain of Job* or *Nehemiah* at the south-east corner of Jerusalem, below the junction of the valley of *Hinnom* and the valley of *Jehoshaphat* or *Kedron* valley (see *Rob.* Pal. i. p. 491, and *Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 50 sqq.).—Ver. 8. It then went up into the more elevated valley of *Ben-hinnom*, on the south side of the Jebusite town, *i.e.* Jerusalem (see at chap. x. 1), and still farther up to the top of the mountain which rises on the west of the valley of *Ben-hinnom*, and at the farthest extremity of the plain of *Rephaim* towards the north. The valley of *Ben-hinnom*, or *Bne-hinnom* (the son or sons of Hinnom), on the south side of Mount Zion, a place which was notorious from the time of Ahaz as the seat of the worship of Moloch (2 Kings xxiii. 10; 2 Chron. xxviii. 3, xxxiii. 6; Jer. vii. 31, etc.), is supposed to have derived its name from a man who had possessions there, but of whom nothing further is known (see *Robinson*, Pal. i. pp. 402 sqq.). The plain of *Rephaim* (LXX. γῆ Ῥαφαείν, in 2 Sam. v. 18, 22, xxiii. 13 κοιλὰς τῶν Τιτάνων), probably named after the gigantic race of *Rephaim*, and mentioned several times in 2 Sam. as a battle-field, is on the west of Jerusalem, and is separated from the edge of the valley of *Ben-hinnom* by a small ridge of rock. It runs southwards to *Mar Elias*, is an hour long, half an hour broad, and was very fertile (Isa. xvii. 5); in fact, even to the present day it is carefully cultivated (see *Rob.* Pal. i. p. 323; *Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 401 sqq.). It is bounded on the north by the mountain ridge already mentioned, which curves westwards on the left side of the road to *Jaffa*. This mountain ridge, or one of the peaks, is "the mountain on the west of the valley of Hinnom," at the northern end of the plain referred to.—Ver. 9. From this mountain height the boundary turned to the fountain of the waters of *Nephtoah*, *i.e.*, according to *Van de Velde's* Mem. p. 336, the present village of *Liftah* (*nun* and *lamed* being interchanged, according to a well-known law), an hour to the north-west of Jerusalem, where there is a copious spring, called by the name of Samuel, which not only supplies large basons, but waters a succession of blooming gardens (*Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 758 sqq.; *Dieterici*, Reisebilder, ii. pp. 221-2). It then "*went out to the towns of Mount Ephraim*," which is not mentioned again, but was probably the steep and lofty mountain ridge on the west side of the Wady *Beit Hanina* (Tere-

binth valley), upon which *Kulonia*, a place which the road to Joppa passes, *Kastal* on a lofty peak of the mountain, the fortress of *Milane*, *Soba*, and other places stand (*Seetzen*, R. ii. pp. 64, 65; *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 158). The boundary then ran to *Baala*, *i.e.* *Kirjath-jearim*, the modern *Kureyet el Enab*, three hours to the north-west of Jerusalem (see at chap. ix. 17).—Ver. 10. From this point "*the boundary* (which had hitherto gone in a north-westerly direction) *turned westwards to Mount Seir, and went out to the shoulder northwards* (*i.e.* to the northern side) *of Har-jearim, that is Chesalon, and went down to Beth-shemesh, and passed over to Timnah.*" Mount *Seir* is the ridge of rock to the south-west of *Kureyet el Enab*, a lofty ridge composed of rugged peaks, with a wild and desolate appearance, upon which *Saris* and *Mishir* are situated (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 155). *Chesalon* is the present *Kesla* on the summit of a mountain, an elevated point of the lofty ridge between Wady *Ghurâb* and *Ismail*, south-west of Kureyet el Enab (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 154). *Beth-shemesh* (*i.e.* sun-house), a priests' city in the territory of Judah (chap. xxi. 16; 1 Chron. vi. 44), is the same as *Ir-shemesh* (chap. xix. 41), a place on the border of Dan, where the ark was deposited by the Philistines (1 Sam. vi. 9 sqq.), and where Amaziah was slain by Joash (2 Kings xiv. 11, 12; 2 Chron. xxv. 21). It was conquered by the Philistines in the time of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18). According to the *Onom.* it was ten Roman miles, *i.e.* four hours, from Eleutheropolis towards Nicopolis. It is the present *Ain Shems*, upon a plateau in a splendid situation, two hours and a half to the south-west of Kesla (*Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 17; Bibl. Res. p. 153). *Timnah*, or *Timnatah*, belonged to Dan (chap. xix. 43); and it was thence that Samson fetched his wife (Judg. xiv. 1 sqq.). It is the present *Tibneh*, three-quarters of an hour to the west of Ain Shems (*Rob.* Pal. i. p. 344).—Ver. 11. Thence "*the border went out towards the north-west to the shoulder of Ekron* (*Akir:* see at chap. xiii. 3), *then bent to Shichron, passed over to Mount Baalah, and went out to Jabneel.*" *Shichron* is possibly *Sugheir*, an hour to the south-west of Jebna (*Knobel*). But if this is correct, the mountain of *Baalah* cannot be the short range of hills to the west of Akir which runs almost parallel with the coast (*Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 21), as *Knobel* supposes; but must be a mountain on the south side of the Wady Surar, since the boundary had already crossed this wady between Ekron and Shichron. *Jabneel* is the Philistine town of *Jabneh*, the walls of which were demolished by Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 6), a place frequently men-

tioned in the books of Maccabees as well as by *Josephus* under the name of *Jamnia*. It still exists as a good-sized village, under the name of *Jebnah*, upon a small eminence on the western side of Nahr Rubin, four hours to the south of Joppa, and an hour and a half from the sea (*Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 22). From Jabneh the boundary went out to the (Mediterranean) Sea, probably along the course of the great valley, *i.e.* the *Nahr Rubin*, as *Robinson* supposes (Pal. ii. p. 343). The *western boundary* was the Great Sea, *i.e.* the Mediterranean.

Vers. 13–19. The account of the conquest of the inheritance, which Caleb asked for and received before the lots were cast for the land (chap. xiv. 6–15), by the extermination of the Anakites from Hebron, and the capture of the fortified town of Debir, is repeated with very slight differences in Judg. i. 10–15, in the enumeration of the different conflicts in which the separate tribes engaged after the death of Joshua, in order to secure actual possession of the inheritance which had fallen to them by lot, and is neither copied from our book by the author of the book of Judges, nor taken from Judges by the author of Joshua; but both of them have drawn it from one common source, upon which the accounts of the conquest of Canaan contained in the book of Joshua are generally founded.—Ver. 13. As an introduction to the account of the conquest of Hebron and Debir, the fact that they gave Caleb his portion among the sons of Judah, namely Hebron, is first of all repeated from chap. xiv. 13. נָתַן impers., they gave, *i.e.* Joshua (chap. xiv. 13). The words "*according to the command of Jehovah to Joshua*" are to be explained from chap. xiv. 9–12, according to which Jehovah had promised, in the hearing of Joshua, to give Caleb possession of the mountains of Hebron, even when they were at Kadesh (chap. xiv. 12). The "father of Anak" is the tribe father of the family of Anakites in Hebron, from whom this town received the name of *Kirjath-arba;* see at Num. xiii. 22 and Gen. xxiii. 2.—Ver. 14. Thence, *i.e.* out of Hebron, Caleb drove (וַיֹּרֶשׁ, *i.e.* rooted out: cf. יִבּוּ, Judg. i. 10) the three sons of Anak, *i.e.* families of the Anakites, whom the spies that were sent out from Kadesh had already found there (Num. xiii. 22). Instead of Caleb, we find the sons of Judah (Judæans) generally mentioned in Judg. i. 10 as the persons who drove out the Anakites, according to the plan of the history in that book, to describe the conflicts in which the several tribes engaged with the Canaanites. But the one does not preclude the other. Caleb did not take Hebron as an

individual, but as the head of a family of Judæans, and with their assistance. Nor is there any discrepancy between this account and the fact stated in chap. xi. 21, 22, that Joshua had already conquered Hebron, Debir, and all the towns of that neighbourhood, and had driven out the Anakites from the mountains of Judah, and forced them back into the towns of the Philistines, as *Knobel* fancies. For that expulsion did not preclude the possibility of the Anakites and Canaanites returning to their former abodes, and taking possession of the towns again, when the Israelitish army had withdrawn and was engaged in the war with the Canaanites of the north; so that when the different tribes were about to settle in the towns and districts allotted to them, they were obliged to proceed once more to drive out or exterminate the Anakites and Canaanites who had forced their way in again (see the remarks on chap. x. 38, 39, p. 117, note).—Vers. 15, 16. From Hebron Caleb went against the inhabitants of *Debir*, to the south of Hebron. This town, which has not yet been discovered (see at chap. x. 38), must have been very strong and hard to conquer; for Caleb offered a prize to the conqueror, promising to give his daughter Achzah for a wife to any one that should take it, just as Saul afterwards promised to give his daughter to the conqueror of Goliath (1 Sam. xvii. 25, xviii. 17).—Ver. 17. Othniel took the town and received the promised prize. *Othniel*, according to Judg. iii. 9 the first judge of the Israelites after Joshua's death, is called בֶּן קְנַז אֲחִי כָלֵב, *i.e.* either "the son of Kenaz (and) brother of Caleb," or "the son of Kenaz the brother of Caleb." The second rendering is quite admissible (comp. 2 Sam. xiii. 3, 32, with 1 Chron. ii. 13), but the former is the more usual; and for this the Masorites have decided, since they have separated *achi Caleb* from *ben-Kenaz* by a *tiphchah*. And this is the correct one, as "the son of Kenaz" is equivalent to "the Kenizzite" (chap. xiv. 6). According to Judg. i. 13 and iii. 9, Othniel was Caleb's younger brother. Caleb gave him his daughter for a wife, as marriage with a brother's daughter was not forbidden in the law (see my Bibl. Archäol. ii. § 107, note 14).—Vers. 18, 19. When Achzah had become his wife ("*as she came*," *i.e.* on her coming to Othniel, to live with him as wife), she urged him to ask her father for a field. "*A field:*" in Judg. i. 14 we find "the field," as the writer had the particular field in his mind. This was not "the field belonging to the town of Debir" (*Knobel*), for Othniel had no need to ask for this, as it naturally went with the town, but a piece of land that could be cultivated, or, as is shown

in what follows, one that was not deficient in springs of water. What Othniel did is not stated, but only what Achzah did to attain her end, possibly because her husband could not make up his mind to present the request to her father. She sprang from the ass upon which she had ridden when her father brought her to Othniel. תָּצַנְּחָ, which only occurs again in Judg. iv. 21, and in the parallel passage, Judg. i. 14, is hardly connected with צָנַע, to be lowly or humble (*Ges.*); the primary meaning is rather that suggested by *Fürst*, to force one's self, to press away, or further; and hence in this case the meaning is, to spring down quickly from the animal she had ridden, like נָפַל in Gen. xxiv. 64. Alighting from an animal was a special sign of reverence, from which Caleb inferred that his daughter had some particular request to make of him, and therefore asked her what she wanted: "*What is to thee?*" or, "*What wilt thou?*" She then asked him for a blessing (as in 2 Kings v. 15); "*for*," she added, "*thou hast given me into barren land.*" אֶרֶץ הַנֶּגֶב (rendered a south-land) is *accus. loci;* so that *negeb* is not to be taken as a *proper name*, signifying the southernmost district of Canaan (as in ver. 21, etc.), but as an appellative, "the dry or arid land," as in Ps. cxxvi. 4. "*Give me springs of water*," *i.e.* a piece of land with springs of water in it. Caleb then gave her the "*upper springs and lower springs:*" this was the name given to a tract of land in which there were springs on both the higher and lower ground. It must have been somewhere in the neighbourhood of Debir, though, like the town itself, it has not yet been found.—Ver. 20 contains the closing formula to vers. 1–19, *i.e.* to the description of the territory of Judah by its boundaries (*vid.* chap. xviii. 20).

In vers. 21–63 there follows a *list of the towns* of the tribe of Judah, arranged in the four districts into which the land was divided, according to the nature of the soil, viz. the south-land (*negeb*), the lowland (*shephelah*) on the Mediterranean Sea, the mountains, and the desert of Judah.

Vers. 21–32. The towns in the *south land.*—*Negeb* (south-land) was the name given to the southernmost district of Canaan in its full extent, from the Arabah, at the southern end of the Dead Sea, right across to the coast of the Mediterranean, and from the southern border of Canaan, as described in vers. 2–4, as far north as Wady *Sheriah*, below Gaza, on the western side, and up to the mountains and desert of Judah on the east, stretching across the wadys of *es Seba*, *Milh*, and *Ehdeib*, above which that part of

Palestine commences where rain is more abundant, and to which, as we have already observed at Num. xiii. 17, the *Negeb* formed a kind of intermediate link between the fertile land and the desert. It was a line of steppe-land, with certain patches here and there that admitted of cultivation, but in which tracts of heath prevailed, for the most part covered with grass and bushes, where only grazing could be carried on with any success. The term which *Eusebius* and *Jerome* employ for *Negeb* in the *Onom.* is *Daromas*, but they carry it farther northwards than the *Negeb* of the Old Testament (see *Reland*, Pal. Ill. pp. 185 sqq.). The numerous towns mentioned in vers. 21–32 as standing in the *Negeb*, may none of them have been large or of any importance. In the list before us we find that, as a rule, several names are closely connected together by the copula *vav*, and in this way the whole may be divided into four separate groups of towns.

Vers. 21–23. *First* group of nine places.—Ver. 21. The towns "*from*," *i.e.* at "*the end of the tribe-territory of Judah, towards the territory of Edom.*" *Kabzeel:* the home of the hero Benaiah (2 Sam. xxiii. 20), probably identical with *Jekabzeel*, which is mentioned in Neh. xi. 25 in connection with *Dibon*, but has not been discovered. This also applies to *Eder* and *Jagur*.—Ver. 22. *Kinah:* also unknown. *Knobel* connects it with the town of the *Kenites*, who settled in the domain of Arad, but this is hardly correct; for with the exception of Judg. i. 16, where the Kenites are said to have settled in the south of Arad, though not till after the division of the land, the Kenites are always found in the western portion of the Negeb (1 Sam. xv. 6, xxvii. 10, xxx. 29), whereas *Kinah* is unquestionably to be looked for in the east. *Dimonah*, probably the same as *Dibon* (Neh. xi. 25); possibly the ruins of *el Dheib*, on the south side of the wady of the same name, to the north-east of Arad (*V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 252), although *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 473) writes the name *Ehdeib*. *Adadah* is quite unknown.—Ver. 23. *Kedesh*, possibly *Kadesh-barnea* (ver. 3). *Hazor* might then be Hezron, in the neighbourhood of Kadesh-barnea (ver. 3). *Ithnan* is unknown.

Vers. 24, 25. *Second* group of five or six places.—Of these, *Ziph* and *Telem* are not met with again, unless *Telem* is the same as *Telaim*, where Saul mustered his army to go against the Amalekites (1 Sam. xv. 4). Their situation is unknown. There was another *Ziph* upon the mountains (see ver. 55). *Knobel* supposes the one mentioned here to be the ruins of *Kuseifeh*, to the

south-west of Arad (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 620). *Ziph* would then be contracted from Ceziph; but the contraction of *Achzib* (chap. xix. 29) into Zib does not present a corresponding analogy, as in that case the abbreviated form is the later one, whereas in the case of Ziph a lengthening of the name must have taken place by the addition of a K. *Bealoth*, probably the same as the Simeonitish *Baaloth-beer* (chap. xix. 8), which is called *Baal* simply in 1 Chron. iv. 33, and which was also called *Ramath-negeb* (chap. xix. 8) and *Ramoth-negeb* (1 Sam. xxx. 27). It is not to be identified with *Baalath*, however (chap. xix. 45; 1 Kings ix. 18), as *V. de Velde* supposes (Reise, ii. pp. 151–2). *Knobel* fancies it may be the ridge and place called *Kubbet el Baul*, between Milh and Kurnub (*Rob.* ii. p. 617); but *Baul* and *Baal* are very different. *Hazor Hadatta* (*Chazor Chadathah*), *i.e.* new Hazor, might be the ruins of *el Hudhaira* on the south of Jebel Khulil (*Rob.* Appendix). *Kenoth* was supposed by *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 472, and Appendix) to be the ruins of *el Kuryetein*, on the north-east of Arad and at the foot of the mountains, and with this *V. de Velde* agrees. *Reland* (Pal. p. 708) connects the following word *Hezron* with *Kenoth*, so as to read *Kenoth-hezron*, *i.e.* Hezron's towns, also called *Hazor*. This is favoured by the *Sept.* and *Syriac*, in which the two words are linked together to form one name, and probably by the Chaldee as well, also by the absence of the copula *vav* (*and*) before Hezron, which is not omitted anywhere else throughout this section, except at the beginning of the different groups of towns, as, for example, before Ziph in ver. 24, and *Amam* in ver. 26, and therefore ought to stand before Hezron if it is an independent town. The Masoretic pointing cannot be regarded as a decisive proof of the contrary.

Vers. 26–28. *Third* group of nine towns.—Ver. 26. *Amam* is not mentioned again, and is quite unknown. *Shema*, which is called *Sheba* in chap. xix. 2, and is mentioned among the towns of the Simeonites between Beersheba and Moladah, is supposed by *Knobel* to be the ruins of *Saâwe* (*Sâweh*) between Milh and Beersheba (see *V. de Velde*, ii. p. 148). *Molada*, which was given to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 2; 1 Chron. iv. 28) and was still inhabited by Jews after the captivity (Neh. xi. 26), was the later Μάλαδα, an Idumæan fortress (*Josephus*, Ant. xviii. 6, 2), which *Eusebius* and *Jerome* describe as being twenty Roman miles, *i.e.* eight hours, to the south of Hebron on the road to Aila (Elath). It has been identified by *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 621) in the ruins of *el Milh*, by

the Wady *Malath* or *Malahh*.—Ver. 27. *Hazar-gaddah*, *Heshmon*, and *Beth-palet* have not yet been identified. The last of the three is mentioned again in Neh. xi. 26, by the side of Molada, as still inhabited by Judæans.—Ver. 28. *Hazar-shual*, *i.e.* fox-court, which was assigned to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 3) and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 27), answers, so far as the name is concerned, to the ruins of *Thâly* (*Rob.* Pal. iii. App.). *Beersheba*, which was a well-known place in connection with the history of the patriarchs (Gen. xxi. 14 sqq., xxii. 19, etc.), and is frequently mentioned afterwards as the southern boundary of the land of Israel (Judg. xx. 1; 2 Sam. xvii. 11, etc.), was also given up to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 2), and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 27). It is the present *Bir es Seba* on the Wady *es Seba* (see at Gen. xxi. 31). *Bizjothjah* is unknown.

Vers. 29–32. The *four groups* of thirteen towns in the western portion of the Negeb.—Ver. 29. *Baalah*, which was assigned to the Simeonites, is called *Balah* in chap. xix. 3, and *Bilhah* in 1 Chron. iv. 29. *Knobel* identifies it with the present *Deir Belah*, some hours to the south-west of Gaza (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 41, 42); but it cannot have been so far to the west, or so near the coast as this. *Iim* (or Ivvim, according to the *Αὐείμ* of the LXX.) is probably the ruins of *Beit-auwa* (*Rob.* iii. App.). *Azem*, which was also given up to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 3; 1 Chron. iv. 29), is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Eboda*, the present *Abḍeh*, eight hours to the south of *Elusa*, a considerable mass of ruins on a ridge of rock (*Rob.* i. p. 287), because the name signifies firmness or strength, which is also the meaning of the Arabic name —a very precarious reason.—Ver. 30. *Eltolad*, which was given to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 4), and is called *Tolad* (without the Arabic article) in 1 Chron. iv. 29, has not been discovered. *Chesil*, for which the LXX. have *Βαιθήλ*, is probably, as *Reland* supposes, simply another name, or as *Knobel* suggests a corrupt reading, for *Bethul* or *Bethuel*, which is mentioned in chap. xix. 4 and 1 Chron. iv. 30, between *Eltolad* and *Hormah*, as a town of the Simeonites, and the same place as *Beth-el* in 1 Sam. xxx. 27. As this name points to the seat of some ancient sanctuary, and there was an idol called *Khalasa* worshipped by the Arabs before the time of Mahomet, and also because *Jerome* observes (*vita Hilar.* c. 25) that there was a temple of Venus at *Elusa*, in which the Saracens worshipped Lucifer (see *Tuch*, Deutsch. Morgenl. Ztschr. iii. pp. 194 sqq.), *Knobel* supposes *Bethul* (*Chesil*) to be Elusa, a

considerable collection of ruins five hours and a half to the south of Beersheba (see *Rob.* i. p. 296): assuming first of all that the name *el Khulasa*, as the Arabs called this place, was derived from the Mahometan idol already referred to; and secondly, that the Saracen Lucifer mentioned by *Jerome* was the very same idol whose image and temple *Janhari* and *Kamus* call *el Khalasa*. *Hormah: i.e. Zephoth*, the present *Sepata* (see at chap. xii. 14). *Ziklag*, which was assigned to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 5; 1 Chron. iv. 30), burnt down by the Amalekites (1 Sam. xxx. 1 sqq.), and still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. xi. 28), is supposed by *Rowland* to be the ancient place called *Asluj* or *Kasluj*, a few hours to the east of Zepata, with which *Knobel*, however, in a most remarkable manner, identifies the *Asluj* to the south-west of Milh on the road to Abdeh, which is more than thirty-five miles distant (see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 621). Both places are too far to the south and east to suit Ziklag, which is to be sought for much farther west. So far as the situation is concerned, the ruins of Tell *Sheriah* or Tell *Mellala*, one of which is supposed by *V. de Velde* to contain the relics of Ziklag, would suit much better; or even, as *Ritter* supposes (Erdk. xvi. pp. 132-3), Tell *el Hasy*, which is half an hour to the south-west of Ajlan, and in which *Felix Fabri* found the ruins of a castle and of an ancient town, in fact of the ancient Ziklag, though *Robinson* (i. pp. 389 sqq.) could discover nothing that indicated in any way the existence of a town or building of any kind. *Madmannah* and *Sansannah* cannot be traced with any certainty. *Madmannah*, which is confounded in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Medemena*) with *Madmena*, a place to the north of Jerusalem mentioned in Isa. x. 31, though elsewhere it is correctly described as *Menois oppidum juxta civitatem Gazam*, has probably been preserved in the present *Miniay* or *Minieh*, to the south of Gaza. *Sansannah*, *Knobel* compares with the Wady *Suni*, mentioned by *Robinson* (i. p. 299), to the south of Gaza, which possibly received its name from some town in the neighbourhood. But in the place of them we find *Beth-marcaboth* (*i.e.* carriage-house) and *Hazar-susa* (*i.e.* horse-court) mentioned in chap. xix. 5 and 1 Chron. iv. 31 among the towns of the Simeonites, which *Reland* very properly regards as the same as Madmannah and Sansannah, since it is very evident from the meaning of the former names that they were simply secondary names, which were given to them as stations for carriages and horses.—Ver. 32. *Lebaoth*, one of the Simeonite towns, called Beth-lebaoth (*i.e.* lion-house) in chap. xix. 6, and *Beth-birei* in 1 Chron. iv. 31, has

not been discovered yet. *Shilchim*, called *Sharuchen* in chap. xix. 6, and *Shaaraim* in 1 Chron. iv. 31, may possibly have been preserved in Tell *Sheriah*, almost half-way between Gaza and Beersheba (*V. de Velde*, ii. p. 154). *Ain* and *Rimmon* are given as Simeonite towns, and being written without the copula, are treated as one name in chap. xix. 7 and 1 Chron. iv. 32, although they are reckoned as two separate towns in chap. xix. 7. But as they were also called *En Rimmon* after the captivity, and are given as one single place in Neh. xi. 29, they were probably so close together that in the course of time they grew into one. *Rimmon*, which is mentioned in Zech. xiv. 10 as the southern boundary of Judah, probably the *Eremmon* of the *Onom.* ("a very large village of the Judæans, sixteen miles to the south of Eleutheropolis in Daroma"), was probably the present ruin called *Um er Rummanim*, four hours to the north of Beersheba (*Rob.* iii. p. 8). Not more than thirty or thirty-five minutes distant from this, between Tell *Khuweilifeh* (*Rob.* iii. p. 8) or *Chewelfeh* (*V. de Velde*) and Tell *Hhora*, you find a large old but half-destroyed well, the large stones of which seem to belong to a very early period of the Israelitish history (*V. de Velde*, ii. p. 153). This was mentioned as a very important drinking-place even in the lifetime of Saladin, whilst to the present day the Tiyâlah Arabs water their flocks there (see *Rob.* iii. p. 8). To all appearance this was *Ain* (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 344). "*All the cities were twenty and nine, and their villages.*" This does not agree with the number of towns mentioned by name, which is not twenty-nine, but thirty-six; so that the number twenty-nine is probably an error of the text of old standing, which has arisen from a copyist confounding together different numeral letters that resembled one another.[1]

[1] Some commentators and critics explain this difference on the supposition that originally the list contained a smaller number of names (only twenty-nine), but that it was afterwards enlarged by the addition of several other places by a different hand, whilst the number of the whole was left just as it was before. But such a conjecture presupposes greater thoughtlessness on the part of the editor than we have any right to attribute to the author of our book. If the author himself made these additions to his original sources, as *Hävernick* supposes, or the Jehovist completed the author's list from his second document, as *Knobel* imagines, either the one or the other would certainly have altered the sum of the whole, as he has not proceeded in so thoughtless a manner in any other case. The only way in which this conjecture could be defended, would be by supposing, as *J. D. Michaelis* and others have done, that the names added were originally placed in the margin, and that these marginal glosses were afterwards interpolated by some thoughtless copyist into the

Vers. 33–47. Towns in the *lowland* or *shephelah*.—The lowland (*shephelah*), which is generally rendered ἡ πεδινή in the *Sept.*, rarely τὸ πεδιόν (Deut. i. 7), but which is transferred as a proper name ἡ Σεφηλά in Obad. 19, Jer. xxxii. 44, xxxiii. 13, as well as in 1 Macc. xii. 38, where even *Luther* has *Sephela*, is the name given to the land between the mountains of Judah and the Mediterranean Sea,—a broad plain of undulating appearance, intersected by heights and low ranges of hills, with fertile soil, in which corn fields alternate with meadows, gardens, and extensive olive groves. It is still tolerably well cultivated, and is covered with villages, which are situated for the most part upon the different hills. Towards the south, the *shephelah* was bounded by the Negeb (ver. 21); on the north, it reached to Ramleh and Lydda, or Diospolis, where the plain of Sharon began,—a plain which extended as far as Carmel, and was renowned for the beauty of its flowers. Towards the east the hills multiply and shape themselves into a hilly landscape, which forms the intermediate link between the mountains and the plain, and which is distinguished from the *shephelah* itself, in chap. x. 40 and xii. 8, under the name of *Ashedoth*, or *slopes*, whereas here it is reckoned as forming part of the *shephelah*. This hilly tract is more thickly studded with villages than even the actual plain. (See *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 363, and iii. p. 29.) The towns in the *shephelah* are divided into four groups.

Vers. 33–36. The *first* group contains the towns in the northern part of the hilly region or slopes, which are reckoned as forming part of the lowland: in all, fourteen towns. The most northerly part of this district was given up to the tribe of Dan on the second division (chap. xix. 41 sqq.). *Eshtaol* and *Zoreah*, which were assigned to the tribe of Dan (chap. xix. 41), and were partly in-

text. But this conjecture is also rendered improbable by the circumstance that, in the lists of towns contained in our book, not only do other differences of the same kind occur, as in ver. 36, where we find only fourteen instead of fifteen, and in chap. xix. 6, where only thirteen are given instead of fourteen, but also differences of the very opposite kind,—namely, where the gross sum given is larger than the number of names, as, for example, in chap. xix. 15, where only five names are given instead of twelve, and in chap. xix. 38, where only sixteen are given instead of nineteen, and where it can be shown that there are gaps in the text, as towns are omitted which the tribes actually received and ceded to the Levites. If we add to this the fact that there are two large gaps in our Masoretic text in chap. xv. 59, 60, and xxi. 35, which proceed from copyists, and also that many errors occur in the numbers given in other historical books of the Old Testament, we are not warranted in tracing the differences in question to any other cause than errors in the text.

habited by Danites (Judg. xiii. 25, xviii. 2, 8, 11) and partly by families of Judah, who had gone out from Kirjath-jearim (1 Chron. ii. 53, iv. 2), probably after the removal of the 600 Danites to Laish-Dan (chap. xix. 47; Judg. xviii.), were situated, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Esthaul* and *Saara*), ten Roman miles to the north of Eleutheropolis, on the road to Nicopolis. *Zoreah*, the home of Samson, who was buried between Zoreah and Eshtaol (Judg. xiii. 2, xvi. 31), was fortified by Rehoboam, and still inhabited by Judæans after the captivity (2 Chron. xi. 10; Neh. xi. 29); it has been preserved in the ruins of *Surá*, at the south-western end of the mountain range which bounds the Wady es Surar on the north (*Rob.* ii. p. 341, and Bibl. Res. p. 153). *Eshtaol* has probably been preserved in *Um Eshteiyeh*, to the south-west (*Rob.* ii. p. 342). *Ashnah* is possibly to be read *Ashvah*, according to the LXX., Cod. Vat. (*Ἀσσα*). In that case it might resemble a town on the east of Zorea (*Tobler*, p. 180), as *Knobel* supposes.—Ver. 34. *Zanoah* was still inhabited by Judæans after the captivity (Neh. xi. 30, iii. 13), and is the present *Zanua*, not far from Zoreah, towards the east (see *Rob.* ii. p. 343). *Engannim* and *Tappuah* are still unknown. *Enam*, the same as *Enaim* (Gen. xxxviii. 14: rendered "an open place"), on the road from Adullam to Timnah on the mountains (ver. 57), has not yet been discovered.—Ver. 35. *Jarmuth*, *i.e.* *Jarmûk*; see chap. x. 3. *Adullam* has not yet been discovered with certainty (see at chap. xii. 15). *Socoh*, which was fortified by Rehoboam, and taken by the Philistines in the reign of Ahaz (2 Chron. xi. 7, xxviii. 18), is the present *Shuweikeh* by the Wady Sumt, half an hour to the south-west of *Jarmûk*, three hours and a half to the south-west of Jerusalem (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 343, 349). The *Onom.* (*s. v. Socoh*) mentions two *viculi* named *Sochoth*, one upon the mountain, the other in the plain, nine Roman miles from Eleutheropolis on the road to Jerusalem. On *Azekah*, see at chap. x. 10.—Ver. 36. *Sharaim*, which was on the west of Socoh and Azekah, according to 1 Sam. xvii. 52, and is called *Σακαρίμ* or *Σαργαρείμ* in the *Sept.*, is probably to be sought for in the present Tell *Zakariya* and the village of *Kefr Zakariya* opposite, between which there is the broad deep valley called Wady Sumt, which is only twenty minutes in breadth (*Rob.* ii. p. 350). This is the more probable as the Hebrew name is a dual. *Adithaim* is unknown. *Gederah* is possibly the same as the *Gederoth* which was taken by the Philistines in the time of Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18), and the *Gedrus* of the *Onom.* (*s. v. Gœdur*, or *Gahedur*), ten Roman miles

to the south of Diospolis, on the road to Eleutheropolis, as the *Gederoth* in ver. 41 was in the actual plain, and therefore did not stand between Diospolis and Eleutheropolis. *Gederothaim* is supposed by *Winer*, *Knobel*, and others, to be an ancient gloss. This is possible no doubt, but it is not certain, as neither the omission of the name from the *Sept.*, nor the circumstance that the full number of towns is given as fourteen, and that this is not the number obtained if we reckon Gederothaim, can be adduced as a decisive proof, since this difference may have arisen in the same manner as the similar discrepancy in ver. 32.

Vers. 37–41. The *second* group, containing the towns of the actual plain in its full extent from north to south, between the hilly region and the line of coast held by the Philistines: *sixteen* towns in all.—Ver. 37. *Zenan*, probably the same as *Zaanan* (Micah i. 11), is supposed by *Knobel* to be the ruins of *Chirbet-es-Senat*, a short distance to the north of Beit-jibrin (*Tobler*, Dritte Wand. p. 124). *Hadashah*, according to the *Mishnah Erub.* v. vi. the smallest place in Judah, containing only fifty houses, is unknown, and a different place from the *Adasa* of 1 Macc. vii. 40, 45, and *Joseph.* Ant. xii. 10, 5, as this was to the north of Jerusalem (*Onom.*).—*Migdal-gad* is unknown. *Knobel* supposes it to be the small hill called *Jedeideh*, with ruins upon it, towards the north of Beit-jibrin (*V. de Velde*, R. ii. pp. 162, 188).—Ver. 38. *Dilean* is unknown; for *Bet Dula*, three full hours to the east of Beit-jibrin, with some relics of antiquity (*Tobler*, pp. 150–1), with which *Knobel* identifies it, is upon the mountains and not in the plain. *Mizpeh, i.e. specula*, a different place from the *Mizpeh* of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 26), was on the north of Eleutheropolis, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Maspha*), and therefore may possibly be the castle *Alba Specula*, or *Alba Custodia* of the middle ages, the present Tell *es Saphieh*, in the middle of the plain and upon the top of a lofty hill, from which there is an extensive prospect in all directions (see *Rob.* ii. p. 363). *Joktheel* has possibly been preserved in the ruins of *Keitulaneh* (*Rob.* Pal. iii. App.), which are said to lie in that neighbourhood.—Ver. 39. *Lachish, i.e. Um Lakis* (see at chap. x. 3). *Bozkath* is unknown: according to *Knobel*, it may possibly be the ruins of *Tubakah*, on the south of Um Lakis and Ajlan (*Rob.* ii. pp. 388, 648). *Eglon, i.e. Ajlan;* see at chap. x. 3.—Ver. 40. *Cabbon*, probably the heap of ruins called *Kubeibeh* or *Kebeibeh*, "which must at some time or other have been a strong fortification, and have formed the key to the central mountains of Judah" (*V. de*

*Velde*, R. ii. p. 156), and which lie to the south of Beit-jibrin, and two hours and a half to the east of Ajlan (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 394). *Lachmas:* according to *Knobel* a corruption of Lachmam, which is the reading given in many MSS. and editions, whilst the *Vulgate* has *Leheman*, and *Luther* (and the *Eng. Ver.*) *Lahmam: Knobel* connects it with the ruins of *el Lahem* to the south of Beit-jibrin (*Tobler*). *Kithlish* (*Chitlis*) is unknown, unless it is to be found in Tell *Chilchis*, to the S.S.E. of Beit-jibrin (*V. de Velde*, R. ii. p. 157).—Ver. 41. *Gederoth*, *Beth-dagon*, and *Naamah* have not yet been traced. The village mentioned in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Beth-dagon*) as *grandis vicus Capher-dagon*, and said to lie between Diospolis and *Jamnia*, the present *Beit-dejan* (*Rob.* iii. p. 30), was far beyond the northern boundary of the tribe of Judah. *Makkedah:* see at chap. x. 10.

Vers. 42–44. The *third* group, consisting of the towns in the southern half of the hilly region: nine towns.—Ver. 42. *Libnah:* see at chap. x. 29. *Ether* and *Ashan*, which were afterwards given to the Simeonites (chap. xix. 7), and are probably to be sought for on the border of the Negeb, have not yet been discovered. The conjecture that *Ether* is connected with the ruins of *Attârah* (*Rob.* iii. App.) in the province of Gaza, is a very uncertain one. *Ashan*, probably the same as *Kor-ashan* (1 Sam. xxx. 30), became a priests' city afterwards (1 Chron. vi. 44; see at chap. xxi. 16).—Ver. 43. *Jiphtah*, *Ashnah*, and *Nezib* have not yet been traced. *Beit-nesib*, to the east of Beit-jibrin on the Wady Sur (*Rob.* ii. p. 344, and iii. p. 13), the Neesib of the *Onom.*, seven Roman miles to the east of Eleutheropolis, does not suit this group so far as its situation is concerned, as it lies within the limits of the first group.—Ver. 44. *Keilah*, which is mentioned in the history of David (1 Sam. xxiii.), and then again after the captivity (Neh. iii. 17), is neither the Κεειλά, *Ceila* of the *Onom.*, on the east of Eleutheropolis, the present *Kila* (*Tobler*, Dritte Wand. p. 151), which lies upon the mountains of Judah; nor is it to be found, as *Knobel* supposes, in the ruins of *Jugaleh* (*Rob.* iii. App.), as they lie to the south of the mountains of Hebron, whereas *Keilah* is to be sought for in the *shephelah*, or at all events to the west or south-west of the mountains of Hebron. *Achzib* (Micah i. 14), the same as Chesib (Gen. xxxviii. 5), has been preserved in the ruins at *Kussâbeh*, a place with a fountain (*Rob.* ii. p. 391), *i.e.* the fountain of Kesâba, about five hours south by west from Beit-jibrin. *Mareshah*, which was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 8; cf. Micah i. 15), and was the place where

Asa defeated Zerah the Ethiopian (2 Chron. xiv. 9), the home of Eliezer (2 Chron. xx. 37), and afterwards the important town of *Marissa* (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 211–12), was between Hebron and Ashdod, since Judas Maccabæus is represented in 1 Macc. v. 65–68 (where the reading should be *Μαρίσσαν* instead of *Σαμάρειαν*, according to *Joseph.* Ant. xii. 8, 6) as going from Hebron through *Marissa* into the land of the Philistines, and turning to *Ashdod.* According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Mareshah*), it was lying in ruins in the time of *Eusebius*, and was about two Roman miles from Eleutheropolis,—a description which applies exactly to the ruins of *Maresh*, twenty-four minutes to the south of Beit-jibrin, which *Robinson* supposes for this reason to be Maresa (*Rob.* ii. p. 422), whereas *Knobel* finds it in *Beit-mirsim*, a place four hours to the south of Beit-jibrin.[1]

Vers. 45–47. The *fourth* group, consisting of the towns of the Philistine line of coast, the northern part of which was afterwards given up to the tribe of Dan (chap. xix. 43), but which remained almost entirely in the hands of the Philistines (see at chap. xiii. 3).[2] —Ver. 45. *Ekron, i.e. Akir* (see chap. xiii. 3). "*Her daughters*" are the other towns of the principality of Ekron that were dependent upon the capital, and חַצֵרִים the villages and farms.—Ver. 46. Judah was also to receive "*from Ekron westwards all that lay on the side of Ashdod and their* (*i.e.* Ekron's and Ashdod's) *villages.*" The different places in this district are not given, because Judah never actually obtained possession of them.—Ver. 47. *Ashdod*, now *Esdûd*, and *Gaza*, now *Ghuzzeh:* see at chap. xiii. 3. Also "*the daughter towns*

[1] *Knobel* founds his opinion partly upon 2 Chron. xiv. 9, according to which Mareshah was in the valley of Zephatah, which is the bason-like plain at *Mirsim*, and partly upon the fact that the *Onom.* also places *Moraste* on the east (south-east) of Eleutheropolis; and *Jerome* (ad Mich. i. 1) describes *Morasthi* as *haud grandem viculum juxta Eleutheropolin*, and as *sepulcrum quondam Micheæ prophetæ nunc ecclesiam* (ep. 108 *ad Eustoch.* § 14); and this *ecclesia* is in all probability the ruins of a church called *Santa Hanneh*, twenty minutes to the south-east of Beit-jibrin, and only ten minutes to the east of *Marash*, which makes the assumption a very natural one, that the *Maresa* and *Morasthi* of the fathers are only different parts of the same place, viz. of *Moreseth-gath*, the home of Micah (Micah i. 1, 14; Jer. xxvi. 18). But neither of these is decisive. The valley of *Zephatah* might be the large open plain which *Robinson* mentions (ii. p. 355) near Beit-jibrin; and the conjecture that *Morasthi*, which *Euseb.* and *Jer.* place *πρὸς ἀνατολάς, contra orientem Eleutheropoleos*, is preserved in the ruins which lie in a straight line towards the south from Beit-jibrin, and are called *Marash*, has not much probability in it.

[2] There is no force in the reasons adduced by *Ewald*, *Bertheau*, and *Knobel*,

*and villages, unto the brook of Egypt* (Wady *el Arish:* see ver. 4), *and the great sea with its territory,*" *i.e.* the tract of land lying between Gaza and the coast of the Mediterranean. Gath and Askalon are not mentioned, because they are both of them included in the boundaries named. Askalon was between Ashdod and Gaza, by the sea-coast (see at chap. xiii. 3), and Gath on the east of Ekron and Ashdod (see chap. xiii. 3), so that, as a matter of course, it was assigned to Judah.

Vers. 48–60. The towns on the *mountains* are divided into five, or more correctly, into six groups. The mountains of Judah, which rise precipitously from the Negeb, between the hilly district on the west, which is reckoned as part of the *shephelah*, and the desert of Judah, extending to the Dead Sea on the east (ver. 61), attain the height of 3000 feet above the level of the sea, in the neighbourhood of Hebron, and run northwards to the broad wady of Beit-hanina, above Jerusalem. They are a large rugged range of limestone mountains, with many barren and naked peaks, whilst the sides are for the most part covered with grass, shrubs, bushes, and trees, and the whole range is intersected by many very fruitful valleys. *Josephus* describes it as abounding in corn, fruit, and wine; and to the present day it contains many orchards, olive grounds, and vineyards, rising in terraces up the sides of the mountains, whilst the valleys and lower grounds yield plentiful harvests of wheat, millet, and other kinds of corn. In ancient times, therefore, the whole of this district was thickly covered with towns (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 185, 191–2, and *C. v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 45 sqq.).

for regarding these verses as spurious, or as a later interpolation from a different source. For the statement, that the "Elohist" merely mentions those towns of which the Hebrews had taken possession, and which they held either partially or wholly in his own day, and also that his list of the places belonging to Judah in the *shephelah* never goes near the sea, are assertions without the least foundation, which are proved to be erroneous by the simple fact, that according to the express statement in ver. 12, the Mediterranean Sea formed the western boundary of the tribe of Judah; and according to chap. xiii. 6, Joshua was to distribute by lot even those parts of Canaan which had not yet been conquered. The difference, however, which actually exists between the verses before us and the other groups of towns, namely, that in this case the "towns" (or daughters) are mentioned as well as the villages, and that the towns are not summed up at the end, may be sufficiently explained from the facts themselves, namely, from the circumstance that the Philistine cities mentioned were capitals of small principalities, which embraced not only villages, but also small towns, and for that very reason did not form connected groups, like the towns of the other districts.

Vers. 48–51. The first *group* consists of eleven towns on the south-west of the mountains.—Ver. 48. *Shamir* has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Um Shaumerah*, mentioned by *Robinson* (iii. App.), though the situation of these ruins has not yet been precisely determined. *Jattir*, which was given up to the priests (chap. xxi. 14), and is mentioned again in 1 Sam. xxx. 27, is described in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Jether*) as a large place inhabited by Christians, twenty miles from Eleutheropolis, *in interiori Daroma juxta Malathan*,—a description which suits the ruins of *Attir*, in the southern portion of the mountains (see *Rob.* ii. p. 194; called *Ater* by *Seetzen*, R. iii. p. 6). *Socoh*, two hours N.W. of this, the present *Shuweikeh* (*Rob.* ii. p. 194), called *Suêche* by *Seetzen* (R. iii. p. 29), a village about four hours from Hebron.—Ver. 49. *Dannah* (*Sept.*, *Syr.*, *Renna*) is unknown. *Knobel* imagines that *Dannah* should be *Danah*, for *Deanah*, *plur. Deanoth*, which would then be suggestive of *Zanute*, the last inhabited place upon the mountains, five hours from Hebron, between Shuweikeh and Attir (see *Rob.* ii. p. 626; *Seetzen*, iii. pp. 27, 29). *Kirjath-sannah*, or *Debir*, has not been traced (see at chap. x. 38).—Ver. 50. *Anab*, on the north-east of Socoh (see at chap. xi. 21). *Eshtemoh*, or *Eshtemoa*, which was ceded to the priests (chap. xxi. 14; 1 Chron. vi. 42), and is mentioned again in 1 Sam. xxx. 28, 1 Chron. iv. 17, 19, is the present *Semua*, an inhabited village, with remains of walls, and a castle of ancient date, on the east of Socoh (*Rob.* ii. pp. 194, 626; *Seetzen*, iii. 28; and *v. Schubert*, R. ii. p. 458). *Anim*, contracted, according to the probable conjecture of *Wilson*, from *Ayanim* (fountains), a place still preserved in the ruins of the village of *el Ghuwein*, on the south of *Semua*, though *Robinson* erroneously connects it with *Ain* (ver. 32: see *Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 626).—Ver. 51. *Goshen*, *Holon*, and *Giloh*, are still unknown. On *Goshen*, see at chap. x. 41. *Holon* was given up to the priests (chap. xxi. 15; 1 Chron. vi. 43); and *Giloh* is mentioned in 2 Sam. xv. 12 as the birth-place of Ahithophel.

Vers. 52–54. The *second* group of nine towns, to the north of the former, in the country round Hebron.—Ver. 52. *Arab* is still unknown; for we cannot connect it, as *Knobel* does, with the ruins of *Husn el Ghurab* in the neighbourhood of Semua (*Rob.* i. p. 312), as these ruins lie within the former group of towns. *Duma*, according to *Eusebius* the largest place in the Daromas in his time, and seventeen miles from Eleutheropolis, is probably the ruined village of *Daumeh*, by the Wady Dilbeh (*Rob.* i. p. 314), which is fourteen miles in a straight line to the south-east of Eleutheropolis according

to the map. *Es'an* (Eshean) can hardly be identified with Asan (1 Chron. iv. 32), as *Van de Velde* supposes, but is more likely *Korasan* (1 Sam. xxx. 30). In that case we might connect it with the ruins of *Khursah*, on the north-west of Daumeh, two hours and a half to the south-west of Hebron (*Rob.* iii. p. 5). As the Septuagint reading is Σομά, *Knobel* conjectures that Eshean is a corrupt reading for *Shema* (1 Chron. ii. 43), and connects it with the ruins of *Simia*, on the south of Daumeh (*Seetzen*, iii. 28, and *Rob.* iii. App.). —Ver. 53. *Janum* is still unknown. *Beth-tappuah* has been preserved in the village of *Teffuh*, about two hours to the west of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 428). *Apheka* has not been discovered.—Ver. 54. *Humtah* is also unknown. *Kirjath-arba*, or *Hebron*: see at chap. x. 3. *Zior* has also not been traced; though, "so far as the name is concerned, it might have been preserved in the heights of *Tugra*, near to Hebron" (*Knobel*).

Vers. 55–57. The *third* group of ten towns, to the east of both the former groups, towards the desert.—Ver. 55. *Maon*, the home of Nabal (1 Sam. xxv. 2), on the border of the desert of Judah, which is here called the desert of Maon (1 Sam. xxiii. 25), has been preserved in Tell *Maîn*, on a conical mountain commanding an extensive prospect, east by north of Semua, three hours and three-quarters to the S.S.E. of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 193). *Carmel*, a town and mountain mentioned in the history of David, and again in the time of Uzziah (1 Sam. xv. 12, xxv. 2 sqq.; 2 Chron. xxvi. 10). In the time of the Romans it was a large place, with a Roman garrison (*Onom.*), and is the present *Kurmul*, on the north-west of Maon, where there are considerable ruins of a very ancient date (*Rob.* ii. pp. 196 sqq.). *Ziph*, in the desert of that name, to which David fled from Saul (1 Sam. xxiii. 14 sqq., xxvi. 2, 3), was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 8), and has been preserved in the ruins upon the hill *Ziph*, an hour and three-quarters to the south-east of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 191). *Juttah*, which was assigned to the priests (chap. xxi. 16), and was a *vicus prægrandis Judæorum* in the time of the fathers (*Onom. s. v. Jethan*), was eighteen Roman miles to the south (south-east) of Eleutheropolis, and is the present *Jutta* or *Jitta*, a large Mahometan place with ruins, an hour and three-quarters to the south of Hebron (*Seetzen*, iii. p. 8; *Rob.* ii. pp. 191, 628).—Ver. 56. *Jezreel*, the home of Ahinoam (1 Sam. xxv. 43, xxvii. 3, etc.), a different place from the Jezreel in the plain of Esdraelon, has not yet been discovered. This also applies to *Jokdeam* and *Zanoah*, which are only met with here.—Ver. 57. *Cain*

(*Hakkain*) is possibly the same as *Jukin*, on the south-east of Hebron (*Rob.* ii. p. 449). *Gibeah* cannot be the *Gabatha* near Bethlehem, mentioned in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Gabathon*), or the *Gibea* mentioned by *Robinson* (ii. p. 327), *i.e.* the village of *Jeba*, on a hill in the Wady el Musurr, as this does not come within the limits of the present group; it must rather be one of the two places (*Gebaa* and *Gebatha*) described as *viculi contra orientalem plagam Daromæ*, though their situation has not yet been discovered. *Timnah*, probably the place already mentioned in Gen. xxxviii. 12 sqq., has not been discovered.

Vers. 58, 59. The *fourth* group of six towns, on the north of Hebron or of the last two groups.—*Halhul*, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Elul*) a place near Hebron named *Alula*, has been preserved in the ruins of *Halhûl*, an hour and a half to the north of Hebron (*Rob.* i. p. 319, ii. p. 186, and Bibl. Res. p. 281). *Beth-zur*, which was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 7), and is frequently mentioned in the time of the Maccabees as a border defence against the Idumæans (1 Macc. iv. 29, 61, etc.), was twenty (? fifteen) Roman miles from Jerusalem, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Beth-zur*), on the road to Hebron. It is the present heap of ruins called *Beit-zur* on the north-west of Halhûl (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 276–7; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 236, 267–8). *Gedor*, the ruins of *Jedûr*, an hour and a half to the north-west (*Rob.* ii. p. 338; Bibl. Res. pp. 282–3).—Ver. 59. *Maarath* and *Eltekon* have not yet been discovered. *Beth-anoth* (probably a contraction of *Beth-ayanoth*) has been discovered by *Wolcott* in the ruins of *Beit-anum*, on the east of Halhûl (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 279; cf. Pal. ii. p. 186).

Between vers. 59 and 60, the *fifth* group of towns given in the Septuagint is wanting in the Masoretic text. This group lay to the north of the fourth, and reached as far as Jerusalem. It comprised a district in which even now there are at least fifteen places and ruins, so that we have not an arbitrary interpolation made by the LXX., as *Jerome* assumed, but rather a gap in the Hebrew text, arising from the fact that an ancient copyist passed by mistake from the word וְחֲצֵרִיקָן in ver. 59 to the same word at the close of the missing section. In the Alexandrian version the section reads as follows in *Cod. Al. and Vat.*: *Θεκὼ καὶ Ἐφραθά, αὕτη ἐστὶ Βαιθλεέμ, καὶ Φαγὼρ καὶ Αἰτὰν καὶ Κουλὸν καὶ Τατὰμ καὶ Θωβὴς* (*Cod. Al.* *Σωρὴς*) *καὶ Καρὲμ καὶ Γαλὲμ καὶ Θεθὴρ* (*Cod. Al.* *Βαιθὴρ*) *καὶ Μανοχώ, πόλεις ἕνδεκα καὶ αἱ κῶμαι αὐτῶν.*—*Theko*, the well-known Tekoah, the home of the wise woman and of the

prophet Amos (2 Sam. xiv. 2; Amos i. 1), was fortified by Rehoboam, and still inhabited after the captivity (2 Chron. xi. 6; Neh. iii. 5, 27). It is the present *Tekua*, on the top of a mountain covered with ancient ruins, two hours to the south of Bethlehem (*Rob.* ii. pp. 181–184; *Tobler*, Denkbl. aus Jerus. pp. 682 sqq.). *Ephratah*, *i.e. Bethlehem*, the family seat of the house of David (Ruth i. 1, iv. 11; 1 Sam. xvi. 4, xvii. 12 sqq.; Micah v. 2), was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 6), and is a place frequently mentioned. It was the birth-place of Christ (Matt. ii. 1 sqq.; Luke ii. 4), and still exists under the ancient name of *Beit-lahm*, two hours to the south of Jerusalem (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 37 sqq.; *Rob.* ii. pp. 159 sqq.; *Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 464 sqq.). *Bethlehem* did not receive the name of *Ephratah* for the first time from the Calebite family of Ephrathites (1 Chron. ii. 19, 50, iv. 4), but was known by that name even in Jacob's time (Gen. xxxv. 19, xlviii. 7). *Phagor*, which was near to Bethlehem according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Fogor*), and is also called *Phaora*, is the present *Faghur*, a heap of ruins to the south-west of Bethlehem (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 275). *Aetan* was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 6), and has been preserved in the *Wady* and *Ain Attan* between Bethlehem and Faghur (*Tobler*, dritte Wand. pp. 88, 89). *Kulon*, the present village of *Kulomeh*, an hour and a half west by north from Jerusalem on the road to Ramleh (see *Rob.* ii. p. 146; Bibl. Res. p. 158: it is called *Kolony* by *Seetzen*, ii. p. 64). *Tatam* cannot be traced. *Sores* (for *Thobes* appears to be only a copyist's error) is probably *Saris*, a small village four hours to the east of Jerusalem, upon a ridge on the south of Wady Aly (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 154–5). *Karem*, now *Ain Karim*, a large flourishing village two hours to the west of Jerusalem, with a Franciscan convent dedicated to John the Baptist in the middle, and a fountain (*Rob.* ii. p. 141; Bibl. Res. p. 271). *Galem*, a different place from the *Gallim* on the north of Jerusalem (Isa. x. 30), has not yet been discovered. *Baither*, now a small dirty village called *Bettir* or *Bittir*, with a beautiful spring, and with gardens arranged in terraces on the western slope of the Wady Bittir, to the south-west of Jerusalem (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 266). *Manocho*, possibly the same place as *Manachat* (1 Chron. viii. 6), has not been found.

Ver. 60. The *sixth* group of only two towns, to the west of Jerusalem, on the northern border of the tribe of Judah.—*Kirjath-baal*, or *Kirjath-jearim*, the present *Kureyet el Enab*; see at ver. 9, and chap. ix. 17. *Rabbah* (*Ha-rabbah*, the great) is quite unknown.

Vers. 61, 62. The *towns in the desert of Judah*, which ran along the Dead Sea from the northern border of Judah (vers. 6, 7) to Wady Fikreh on the south, and reached to the districts of Maon, Ziph, Tekoah, and Bethlehem towards the west. This tract of land is for the most part a terrible desert, with a soil composed of chalk, marl, and limestone, and with bald mountains covered with flint and hornstone, and without the slightest trace of vegetation on the side bordering on the Dead Sea (see *v. Schubert*, Reise, iii. pp. 94, 96; *Rob.* ii. pp. 202, 475, 477). Yet wherever there are springs even this desert is covered with a luxuriant vegetation, as far as the influence of the water extends (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 249, 258); and even in those parts which are now completely desolate, there are traces of the work of man of a very ancient date in all directions (*Rob.* ii. p. 187). Six towns are mentioned in the verses before us. *Beth-arabah:* see at ver. 6. *Middin* and *Secaca* are unknown. According to *Knobel*, *Middin* is probably the ruins of *Mird* or *Mardeh*, to the west of the northern end of the Dead Sea (*Rob.* ii. p. 270).—Ver. 62. *Nibsan*, also unknown. The city of salt (salt town), in which the Edomites sustained repeated defeats (2 Sam. viii. 13; Ps. lx. 2; 2 Kings xiv. 7; 1 Chron. xviii. 12; 2 Chron. xxv. 11), was no doubt at the southern end of the Dead Sea, in the Salt Valley (*Rob.* ii. p. 483). *Engedi*, on the Dead Sea (Ezek. xlvii. 10), to which David also fled to escape from Saul (1 Sam. xxiv. 1 sqq.), according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Engaddi*) a *vicus prægrandis*, the present *Ain-Jidi*, a spring upon a shelf of the high rocky coast on the west of the Dead Sea, with ruins of different ancient buildings (see *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 227-8; *Rob.* ii. pp. 214 sqq.; *Lynch*, pp. 178-9, 199, 200).—In ver. 63 there follows a notice to the effect that the Judæans were unable to expel the Jebusites from Jerusalem, which points back to the time immediately after Joshua, when the Judæans had taken Jerusalem and burned it (Judg. i. 8), but were still unable to maintain possession. This notice is not at variance with either chap. xviii. 28 or Judg. i. 21, since it neither affirms that Jerusalem belonged to the tribe of Judah, nor that Judah alone laid claim to the possession of the town to the exclusion of the Benjamites (see the explanation of Judg. i. 8).

## INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF JOSEPH.—CHAP. XVI. XVII.

The descendants of Joseph drew one lot, that the inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh might not be separated from that of the tribe of Ephraim. But the territory was immediately divided between the two separate tribes of the children of Joseph, Ephraim receiving the southern portion of the land that had fallen to it by lot, and half Manasseh the northern. Accordingly we find the southern boundary of the whole territory described first of all in chap. xvi. 1–4, both the boundary which separated it from the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 11 sqq.), and that which divided it from Dan (chap. xix. 40 sqq.); then the territory of Ephraim is given, with a minute description of the northern boundary (chap. xvi. 5–10); and finally the territory assigned to the families of Manasseh (chap. xvii. 1–13), without any precise delineation of its northern boundaries, all that is stated being that the Manassites touched Asher and Issachar towards the north, and also received some scattered towns with their villages in the territory of both those tribes (chap. xvii. 10, 11). To this there is appended in vers. 14–18 the complaint of the children of Joseph concerning the inheritance that had fallen to them.

Chap. xvi. 1–4. *Territory of the Tribe of Joseph.*—Ver. 1. "*And there came out the lot of the children of Joseph from Jordan by Jericho.*" "The lot came out," viz. from the urn (cf. chap. xix. 1, 17, 24). The expression "came up" is used in the same sense in chap. xviii. 11. The connection of these two words with the rest of the sentence, "*from Jordan by Jericho*," may be explained on the supposition that the lot which came out of the urn determined the inheritance that fell to the tribe, so that we might paraphrase the verse in this manner: "There came out the lot to the children of Joseph, namely, the inheritance, which goes out from, or whose boundary commences at, the Jordan by Jericho," *i.e.* from that part of the Jordan which is opposite to Jericho, and which is still more precisely defined by the additional clause, "by the water of Jericho eastward." The water of Jericho is the present fountain of *es Sultan*, half an hour to the north-west of *Riha*, the only large fountain in the neighbourhood of Jericho, whose waters spread over the plain, and form a small brook, which no doubt flows in the rainy season through the Wady Kelt into the Jordan (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 283–4; *Tobler*, Topogr. v. Jerus. ii. pp. 558–9). "*The wilderness*" is in opposition to "the lot," so that the sense is, "*namely, the desert*

*going up from Jericho to the mountains to Bethel.*" According to chap. xviii. 12, the reference is to the desert of Beth-aven, which was on the east of Bethel, between the Wady *Suwar* (*Tuwar*) and Mutyah, (see at chap. vii. 2). Towards the east this desert terminates with the Jebel Kuruntul (Quarantana) on the north-west of Jericho, where it descends precipitously into the valley of the Jordan, or *v. v.*, where it rises out of the Jordan valley. According to chap. xviii. 12, the same boundary went up by the shoulder of Jericho towards the north, *i.e.* along the northern range of mountains by Jericho, which cannot be any other than the "conspicuous double height, or rather group of heights," in front of the mountain of Quarantana, at the eastern foot of which lies the fountain of Ain es Sultan (*Rob.* ii. p. 284). In all probability, therefore, the boundary ran up towards the north-west, from the Sultan fountain to Ain Duk, and thence in a westerly direction across to Abu Seba (along which road *Robinson* had a frightful desert on his right hand: Pal. ii. p. 310), and then again towards the north-west to Beitin (Bethel), according to chap. xviii. 13, along the southern shoulder (or side) of Luz, *i.e.* Bethel.—Ver. 2. "*And it went out from Bethel to Luz.*" Bethel is distinguished from Luz in this passage, because the reference is not to the town of Bethel, which was called Luz by the Canaanites (*vid.* Gen. xxviii. 19), but to the southern range of mountains belonging to Bethel, from which the boundary ran out to the town of Luz, so that this town, which stood upon the border, was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 22). From this point the boundary went over "*to the territory of the Arkite to Ataroth.*" We know nothing further about the Arkite than that David's friend Hushai belonged to that family (2 Sam. xv. 32, xvi. 16; 1 Chron. xxvii. 33). *Ataroth*, called *Ataroth-Adar* in chap. xviii. 13, was not the present village of Atâra, an hour and a half to the south of Jiljilia (*Rob.* iii. p. 80), as I once supposed, but the ruins of *Atâra*, three-quarters of an hour to the south of Bireh (Beeroth, *Rob.* ii. p. 314), with which the expression "*descended*" in chap. xviii. 13 perfectly harmonizes. Consequently the boundary was first of all drawn in a south-westerly direction from Beitin to Bireh (chap. xviii. 25), and then southwards to Atârah. —Ver. 3. From this point "*it went down westward to the territory of the Japhletites to the territory of lower Beth-horon,*" or, according to chap. xviii. 13, "to the mountain (or range) which is on the south by lower Beth-horon." The *Japhletite* is altogether unknown, as the Asherite of this name cannot possibly be thought of (1 Chron.

vii. 32, 33). *Lower Beth-horon* is the present *Beit-Ur Tachta*, a village upon a low ridge. It is separated from Upper Beth-horon, which lies farther east, by a deep wady (see at chap. x. 10, and *Rob.* iii. p. 59). "*And to Gezer*," which was probably situated near the village of *el Kubab* (see at chap. x. 33). "*And the goings out thereof are at the sea*" (the Mediterranean), probably running towards the north-west, and following the Wady Muzeireh to the north of Japho, which was assigned to the Danites, according to chap. xix. 46.—Ver. 4. The territory commencing at the boundary lines mentioned was allotted to Ephraim and Manasseh as their inheritance.

Vers. 5–10. *Territory of the tribe of Ephraim*, according to its families.—Ver. 5. "*The border of their inheritance was from the east Atroth-addar and* (along the line) *to Upper Beth-horon*,"—a brief description of the southern boundary, which is more minutely described in vers. 1–3. Upper Beth-horon is mentioned here instead of Lower Beth-horon (ver. 3). This makes no difference, however, as the two places stood quite close to one another (see at chap. x. 10). In vers. 6–8 the northern boundary of Ephraim is given, namely, from the middle, or from "a central point near the watershed" (*Knobel*), first towards the east (vers. 6 and 7), and then towards the west (ver. 8). The eastern half of the northern boundary went יָמָּה, *i.e.* when regarded from the west, or looked at towards the west, to the north side of *Michmethah*. According to chap. xvii. 7, this place was before Shechem, and therefore in any case it was not far from it, though it has not been discovered yet. *Knobel* supposes it to have been on the site of the present *Kabate* (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 166), *Kubatiyeh*, an hour and a half to the south of *Jenin* (*Rob.* iii. 154), assuming that *Michmethah* might also have been pronounced *Chemathah*, and that *b* may have been substituted for *m*. But *Kabate* is six hours to the north of Shechem, and therefore was certainly not "*before Shechem*" (chap. xvii. 7). It then turned "*eastward to Taanath-shiloh*" (*Τηνὰθ Σηλώ*, LXX.), according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Thenath*) ten Roman miles from Neapolis (Sichem), on the way to the Jordan, most probably the *Thena* of *Ptol.* (v. 16, 5), the present *Tana*, *Ain Tana*, a heap of ruins on the south-east of Nabulus, where there are large cisterns to be found (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 295; *Ritter*, Erdk. xv. p. 471). And "*then went by on the east to Janoah*" (*i.e. Jano in Acrabittena regione*, twelve Roman miles from Neapolis: *Onom.*), the present ruins of *Janûn*, a miserable village, with extensive ruins of great antiquity, about three

hours to the south-east of Nabulus, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of Akrabeh (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 297; *Van de Velde*, R. ii. p. 268).—Ver. 7. From Janoah the boundary went down "*to Ataroth and Naarath.*" *Ataroth*, a different place from the Ataroth or Atroth-addar mentioned in vers. 3 and 5, is apparently to be sought for on the eastern slope of the mountains by the side of the Ghor, judging from the expression "went down;" but it has not yet been discovered. *Naarath*, probably the same as *Naaran*, in eastern Ephraim (1 Chron. vii. 28), is described in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Naaratha*) as *viculus Judæorum Naorath*, five Roman miles (*i.e.* two hours) from Jericho, probably on the north-east. The boundary line then touched Jericho, *i.e.* the district of Jericho, namely on the north side of the district, as Jericho was allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 21). At this point it also coincided with the southern boundary of the tribe of Joseph (ver. 1) and the northern boundary of Benjamin (chap. xviii. 12).—Ver. 8. The western half of the northern boundary went from *Tappuah* westwards to the Cane-brook, and terminated at the sea. *Tappuah*, called *En-tappuah* in chap. xvii. 7, as the southern boundary of Manasseh, which is there described, and which ran from Michmethah to En-tappuah, coincides with the northern boundary of Ephraim, must not be identified with the royal town of that name mentioned in chap. xii. 17, and therefore was not *Kefr Kud* (*Capercota*), on the west of Jenin (Ginäa). This place was so far to the north, viz. seven hours to the north of Nabulus, that the boundary from Michmethah, in the neighbourhood of Shechem (Nabulus) onwards, would have run from south to north instead of in a westerly direction. Still less can *En-tappuah* be found, as *Van de Velde* supposes, in the old well of the deserted village of *Atûf*, five hours to the east of Nabulus. It must have been to the west of Shechem; but it has not yet been discovered, as the country to the west of Nabulus and Sebastieh has "not been examined" (*Van de Velde*). The *Cane-brook* is no doubt the brook of that name mentioned by *Bohad.* (*vita Salad.* pp. 191, 193); only it is not quite clear "whether the *Abu Zabura* is intended, or a brook somewhat farther south, where there is still a *Nahr el Kassab.*"—Ver. 9. The tribe of Ephraim also received some scattered towns in the territory of the tribe of Manasseh, in fact all those towns to which Tappuah belonged, according to chap. xvii. 8, with the dependent villages.[1]—

[1] The reason why the Ephraimites received scattered towns and villages in the tribe-territory of Manasseh, is supposed by *Calvin*, *Masius*, and others, to

Ver. 10. From Gezer, however (see ver. 3), they could not drive out the Canaanites, so that they still dwelt among the Ephraimites, but were reduced to a state of serfdom. This notice resembles the one in chap. xv. 63, and is to be interpreted in the same way.

Chap. xvii. 1–13. *The inheritance of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan* was on the north of Ephraim.—Vers. 1*b*–6. Before proceeding to the more detailed description of the inheritance, the historian thinks it necessary to observe that the Manassites received a double inheritance. This remark is introduced with the words "*for he was the first-born of Joseph.*" On this account, in addition to the territory already given to him in Gilead and Bashan, he received a second allotment of territory in Canaan proper. With the word לְמָכִיר (for Machir) the more minute account of the division of the Manassites commences. לְמָכִיר וגו׳ is first of all written absolutely at the beginning of the sentence, and then resumed in וַיְהִי לוֹ: "*to Machir, the first-born of Manasseh . . . to him were Gilead and Bashan assigned, because he was a man of war*," *i.e.* a warlike man, and had earned for himself a claim to the inheritance of Gilead and Bashan through the peculiar bravery which he had displayed in the conquest of those lands. By *Machir*, however, we are not to understand the actual son of Manasseh, but his family; and אֲבִי הַגִּלְעָד does not mean "father of Gilead," but *lord* (possessor) *of Gilead*, for Machir's son Gilead is always called גִּלְעָד without the article (*vid.* chap. xvii. 3; Num. xxvi. 29, 30, xxvii. 1, xxxvi. 1; 1 Chron. vii. 17), whereas the country of that name is just as constantly called הַגִּלְעָד (see ver. 1, the last clause, ver. 5, chap. xiii. 11, 31; Num. xxxii. 40; Deut. iii. 10 sqq.). "*And there came, i.e.* the lot fell (the lot is to be repeated from ver. 1), *to the other descendants of Manasseh according to their families*," which are then enumerated as in Num. xxvi. 30–32. "*These are the male descendants of Manasseh.*" הַזְּכָרִים must not be altered, notwithstanding the fact that it is preceded and followed by הַנּוֹתָרִים; it is evidently used deliberately as an antithesis to the female descendants of Manasseh mentioned in ver. 3.—Vers. 3 sqq. Among the six families of Manasseh (ver. 2), *Zelophehad*, a descendant of *Hepher*, left no son; but he had five daughters, whose names are given in ver. 3

have been, that after the boundaries had been arranged, on comparing the territory allotted to each with the relative numbers of the two tribes, it was found that Ephraim had received too small a possession. This is quite possible; at the same time there may have been other reasons which we cannot discover now, as precisely the same thing occurs in the case of Manasseh (chap. xvii. 11).

(as in Num. xxvi. 33, xxvii. 1, xxxvi. 10). These daughters had petitioned Moses for a separate portion in the promised land, and their request had been granted (Num. xxvii. 2 sqq., compared with chap. xxxvi.). They therefore came before the committee appointed for dividing the land and repeated this promise, which was at once fulfilled. Consequently there were ten families of Manasseh who had received portions by the side of Ephraim, five male and five female. "*And* (ver. 5) *there fell the measurements of Manasseh* (as) *ten*," *i.e.* ten portions were assigned to the Manassites (on the west of the Jordan), beside the land of Gilead, because (as is again observed in ver. 6) the daughters of Manasseh, *i.e.* of Zelophehad the Manassite, received an inheritance among his sons (*i.e.* the rest of the Manassites).

Vers. 7–13. *Boundaries and extent of the inheritance of the ten families of Manasseh.*—Vers. 7–10*a*, the southern boundary, which coincides with the northern boundary of Ephraim described in chap. xvi. 6–8, and is merely given here with greater precision in certain points. It went "*from Asher* to *Michmethah, before Shechem.*" *Asher* is not the territory of the tribe of Asher, but a distinct locality; according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Asher*) a place on the high road from Neapolis to Scythopolis, fifteen Roman miles from the former. It is not to be found, however, in the ruins of Tell *Um el Aschera* (*V. de Velde*) or Tell *Um Ajra* (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 310, 327), an hour to the south of Beisan, as *Knobel* supposes, but in the village of *Yasir*, where there are magnificent ruins, about five hours and ten minutes from Nabulus on the road to Beisan (*V. de Velde*, Mem. pp. 237, 289; R. ii. p. 295). *Michmethah*, before *Shechem*, is still unknown (see chap. xvi. 6). *Shechem* was founded by the Hivite prince Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 18), and is frequently mentioned in the book of Genesis. It stood between Ebal and Gerizim, was given up by Ephraim to the Levites, and declared a free city (city of refuge: chap. xxi. 21, xx. 7). It was there that the ten tribes effected their separation from Judah (1 Kings xii. 1 sqq.), and Jeroboam resided there (1 Kings xii. 25). In later times it was the chief city of the country of Samaria, and the capital of the Samaritans (John iv. 5); and the name of *Neapolis*, or *Flavia Neapolis*, from which the present *Nabulus* or *Nablus* has come, was given to it in honour of Vespasian (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 161 sqq.). From this point the boundary went אֶל־הַיָּמִין (*i.e.* either "*to the right side*," the south side, or *to Yamin*), "*to the inhabitants of En-tappuah.*" Whether *Yamin* is an appella-

tive or a proper name is doubtful. But even if it be the name of a place, it is quite certain that it cannot be the village of *Yamôn*, an hour to the south-east of *Taanuk* (*Rob.* iii. pp. 161, 167, etc.), as this is much too far north, and, judging from ver. 11, belonged to the territory of Asher. In the case of *En-tappuah*, the inhabitants are mentioned instead of the district, because the district belonged to Manasseh, whilst the town on the border of Manasseh was given to the Ephraimites. The situation of the town has not yet been discovered: see at chap. xvi. 8. From this point the boundary ran down to the Cane-brook (see chap. xvi. 8), namely to the south side of the brook. "*These towns were assigned to Ephraim in the midst of the towns of Manasseh, and* (but) *the territory of Manasseh was on the north of the brook.*" The only possible meaning of these words is the following: From Tappuah, the boundary went down to the Cane-brook and crossed it, so that the south side of the brook really belonged to the territory of Manasseh; nevertheless the towns on this south side were allotted to Ephraim, whilst only the territory to the north of the brook fell to the lot of the Manassites. This is expressed more plainly in ver. 10*a*: "*To the south* (of the brook the land came) *to Ephraim, and to the north to Manasseh.*" In ver. 10*b* the northern and eastern boundaries are only briefly indicated: "*And they* (the Manassites) *touched Asher towards the north, and Issachar towards the east.*" The reason why this boundary was not described more minutely, was probably because it had not yet been fixed. For (ver. 11) Manasseh also received towns and districts in (within the territory of) Issachar and Asher, viz. Beth-shean, etc. *Beth-shean*, to the wall of which Saul's body was fastened (1 Sam. xxxi. 10 sqq.; 2 Sam. xxi. 12), was afterwards called *Scythopolis*. It was in the valley of the Jordan, where the plain of Jezreel slopes off into the valley; its present name is *Beisan*, a place where there are considerable ruins of great antiquity, about two hours from the Jordan (*vid. Seetzen*, ii. pp. 162 sqq.; *Rob.* iii. p. 174; Bibl. Res. p. 325; *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 150–1). This city, with its daughter towns, was in the territory of Issachar, which was on the east of Manasseh, and may have extended a considerable distance towards the south along the valley of the Jordan, as the territory of Manasseh and Ephraim did not run into the valley of the Jordan; but Asher (Yasir) is mentioned in ver. 7 as the most easterly place in Manasseh, and, according to chap. xvi. 6, 7, the eastern boundary of Ephraim ran down along the eastern edge of the mountains as far as Jericho, without including the Jordan valley. At the same

time, the Ghor on the western side of the Jordan below Beisan, as far as the plain of Jericho, was of no great value to any tribe, as this district, according to *Josephus* (de Bell. Jud. iv. 8, 2, and iii. 10, 7), was uninhabited because of its barrenness. The other towns, *Ibleam*, etc., with the exception of Endor perhaps, were in the territory of Asher, and almost all on the south-west border of the plain of Esdraelon. *Ibleam*, called *Bileam* in 1 Chron. vi. 55 (70), a Levitical town (see at chap. xxi. 25), was not very far from Megiddo (2 Kings ix. 27), and has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Khirbet-Belameh*, half an hour to the south of Jenin; according to *Schultz*, it is the same place as *Belamon*, *Belmen*, or *Belthem* (Judith iv. 4, vii. 3, viii. 3). With וְאֶת־יֹשְׁבֵי דֹאר the construction changes, so that there is an anacolouthon, which can be explained, however, on the ground that לְ הָיָה may not only mean to be assigned to, but also to receive or to have. In this last sense וְאֶת is attached. The inhabitants are mentioned instead of the towns, because the historian had already the thought present in his mind, that the Manassites were unable to exterminate the Canaanites from the towns allotted to them. *Dor* is the present *Tortura* (see at chap. xi. 2). *Endor*, the home of the witch (1 Sam. xxviii. 7), four Roman miles to the south of Tabor (*Onom.*), at present a village called *Endôr*, on the northern shoulder of the Duhy or Little Hermon (see *Rob.* iii. p. 225; Bibl. Res. p. 340). *Taanach* and *Megiddo*, the present *Taanuk* and *Lejun* (see at chap. xii. 21). The three last towns, with the places dependent upon them, are connected more closely together by שְׁלֹשֶׁת הַנָּפֶת, the three-hill-country, probably because they formed a common league.—Vers. 12, 13. The Manassites were unable to exterminate the Canaanites from these six towns, and the districts round; but when they grew stronger, they made them tributary slaves (cf. chap. xvi. 10).

Vers. 14–18. *Complaint of the Descendants of Joseph respecting the inheritance allotted to them.*—Ver. 14. As the descendants of Joseph formed two tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh), they gave utterance to their dissatisfaction that Joshua had given them ("*me*," the house of Joseph, ver. 17) but one lot, but one portion (חֶבֶל, a measure, then the land measured off), for an inheritance, although they were a strong and numerous people. "*So far hath Jehovah blessed me hitherto.*" עַד־אֲשֶׁר, to this (*sc.* numerous people), is to be understood *de gradu;* עַד־פֹּה, hitherto, *de tempore.* There was no real ground for this complaint. As Ephraim numbered only 32,500 and Manasseh 52,700 at the second census in the time

of Moses (Num. xxvi.), and therefore Ephraim and half Manasseh together did not amount to more than 58,000 or 59,000, this tribe and a half were not so strong as Judah with its 76,500, and were even weaker than Dan with its 64,400, or Issachar with its 64,300 men, and therefore could not justly lay claim to more than the territory of a single tribe. Moreover, the land allotted to them was in one of the most fertile parts of Palestine. For although as a whole the mountains of Ephraim have much the same character as those of Judah, yet the separate mountains are neither so rugged nor so lofty, there being only a few of them that reach the height of 2500 feet above the level of the sea (see *Ritter*, Erdk. xv. pp. 475 sqq.; *V. de Velde*, Mem. pp. 177 sqq.); moreover, they are intersected by many broad valleys and fertile plateaux, which are covered with fruitful fields and splendid plantations of olives, vines, and fig trees (see *Rob.* iii. p. 78, Bibl. Res. pp. 290 sqq.; *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 165 sqq., 190 sqq.). On the west the mountains slope off into the hill country, which joins the plain of Sharon, with its invariable fertility. "The soil here is a black clay soil of unfathomable depth, which is nearly all ploughed, and is of such unusual fertility that a cultivated plain here might furnish an almost unparalleled granary for the whole land. Interminable fields full of wheat and barley with their waving ears, which were very nearly ripe, with here and there a field of millet, that was already being diligently reaped by the peasants, presented a glorious sight" (*Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 567–8).—Ver. 15. Joshua therefore sent them back with their petition, and said, "*If thou art a strong people, go up into the wood and cut it away*," *i.e.* make room for houses, fields, and meadows, by clearing the forests, "*in the land of the Perizzites and Rephaim, if the mountain of Ephraim is too narrow for thee.*" The name "mountain of Ephraim" is used here in a certain sense proleptically, to signify the mountain which received its name from the tribe of Ephraim, to which it had only just been allotted. This mountain, which is also called the mountain of Israel (chap. xi. 16, 21), was a limestone range running from Kirjath-jearim, where the mountains of Judah terminate (see at chap. xi. 21), to the plain of Jezreel, and therefore embracing the greater part of the tribe-territory of Benjamin. The wood, which is distinguished from the mountain of Ephraim, and is also described in ver. 18 as a mountainous land, is either the mountainous region extending to the north of Yasir as far as the mountains of Gilboa, and lying to the west of Beisan, a region which has not

yet been thoroughly explored, or else, as *Knobel* supposes, "the broad range of woody heights or low woody hills, by which the mountains of Samaria are connected with Carmel on the north-west (*Rob.* iii. p. 189), between Taanath and Megiddo on the east, and Cæsarea and Dor on the west." Possibly both may be intended, as the children of Joseph were afraid of the Canaanites in Beisan and in the plain of Jezreel (ver. 16). The Rephaim were dwelling there, a tribe of gigantic stature (see at Gen. xiv. 5), also the Perizzites (see at Gen. xiii. 7).—Ver. 16. The children of Joseph replied that the mountain (allotted to them) would not be enough for them (מָצָא, as in Num. xi. 22; Zech. x. 10); and that all the Canaanites who dwelt in the land of the plain had iron chariots, both those in Beth-shean and its daughter towns, and those in the valley of Jezreel. אֶרֶץ־הָעֵמֶק, the land of the plain or valley land, includes both the valley of the Jordan near Beisan, and also the plain of Jezreel, which opens into the Jordan valley in the neighbourhood of Beisan (*Rob.* iii. p. 173). The *plain* of *Jezreel*, so called after the town of that name, is called the "great field of Esdrelom" in Judith i. 4, and τὸ μέγα πεδίον by *Josephus*. It is the present *Merj* (*i.e.* pasture-land) *Ibn Aamer*, which runs in a south-westerly direction from the Mediterranean Sea above Carmel, and reaches almost to the Jordan. It is bounded on the south by the mountains of Carmel, the mountain-land of Ephraim and the range of hills connecting the two, on the north by the mountains of Galilee, on the west by the southern spurs of the Galilean highland, and on the east by the mountains of Gilboa and the Little Hermon (Jebel Duhy). Within these boundaries it is eight hours in length from east to west, and five hours broad; it is fertile throughout, though very desolate now (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. iii. pp. 39 sqq.). "*Iron chariots*" are not scythe chariots, for these were introduced by Cyrus, and were unknown to the Medes, Persians, and Arabians, *i.e.* to the early Asiatics before his time (*Xen. Cyr.* vi. 1, 27, 30), as well as to the ancient Egyptians (see *Wilkinson*, Manners and Customs, i. p. 350); they were simply chariots tipped with iron, just as the Egyptian war-chariots were made of wood and strengthened with metal nails and tips (*Wilkinson*, pp. 342, 348).—Vers. 17, 18. As the answer of the children of Joseph indicated cowardice and want of confidence in the help of God, Joshua contented himself with repeating his first reply, though more fully and with the reasons assigned. "*Thou art a strong people, and hast great power; there will not be one lot to thee:*" *i.e.*

because thou art a numerous people and endowed with strength, there shall not remain one lot to thee, thou canst and wilt extend thine inheritance. "*For the mountain will be thine, for it is forest, and thou wilt hew it out, and its goings out will become thine.*" By the mountain we are not to understand the mountains of Ephraim which were assigned to the Ephraimites by the lot, but the wooded mountains mentioned in ver. 15, which the children of Joseph were to hew out, so as to make outlets for themselves. "*The outgoings of it*" are the fields and plains bordering upon the forest. For the Canaanites who dwelt there (ver. 15) would be driven out by the house of Joseph, just because they had iron chariots and were strong, and therefore only a strong tribe like Joseph was equal to the task. "Not one of the tribes of Israel is able to fight against them (the Canaanites) because they are strong, but you have strength enough to be able to expel them" (*Rashi*).

THE TABERNACLE SET UP AT SHILOH. SURVEY OF THE LAND THAT HAD STILL TO BE DIVIDED. INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.—CHAP. XVIII.

Ver. 1. THE TABERNACLE SET UP AT SHILOH.—As soon as the tribe of Ephraim had received its inheritance, Joshua commanded the whole congregation to assemble in Shiloh, and there set up the tabernacle, in order that, as the land was conquered, the worship of Jehovah might henceforth be regularly observed in accordance with the law. The selection of Shiloh as the site for the sanctuary was hardly occasioned by the fitness of the place for this purpose, on account of its being situated upon a mountain in the centre of the land, for there were many other places that would have been quite as suitable in this respect; the reason is rather to be found in the name of the place, viz. *Shiloh, i.e.* rest, which called to mind the promised Shiloh (Gen. xlix. 10), and therefore appeared to be pre-eminently suitable to be the resting-place of the sanctuary of the Lord, where His name was to dwell in Israel, until He should come who was to give true rest to His people as the Prince of Peace. In any case, however, Joshua did not follow his own judgment in selecting Shiloh for this purpose, but acted in simple accordance with the instructions of God, as the Lord had expressly reserved to himself the choice of the place where His name should dwell (Deut. xii. 11). *Shiloh*, according to the *Onom.*,

was twelve Roman miles or five hours to the south of Neapolis (Nablus), and about eight hours to the north of Jerusalem; at present it is a heap of ruins, bearing the name of *Seilun* (see *Rob.* iii. p. 85). The tabernacle continued standing at Shiloh during the time of the judges, until the ark of the covenant fell into the hands of the Philistines, in the lifetime of Eli, when the holy tent was robbed of its soul, and reduced to the mere shadow of a sanctuary. After this it was removed to Nob (1 Sam. xxi. 2); but in consequence of the massacre inflicted by Saul upon the inhabitants of this place (1 Sam. xxii. 19), it was taken to Gibeon (1. Kings iii. 4: see *Keil*, Bibl. Arch. i. § 22). From this time forward Shiloh continued to decline, because the Lord had rejected it (Ps. lxxviii. 60; Jer. vii. 12, xxvi. 6). That it was destroyed by the Assyrians, as *Knobel* affirms, is not stated in the history.

Vers. 2–10. SURVEY OF THE LAND THAT HAD YET TO BE DIVIDED.—Ver. 2. After the tabernacle had been set up, the casting of the lots and division of the land among the other seven tribes were to be continued; namely at Shiloh, to which the congregation had removed with the sanctuary.—Vers. 3, 4. But, for the reasons explained in chap. xiv. 1, these tribes showed themselves "*slack to go to possess the land which the Lord had given them*," *i.e.* not merely to conquer it, but to have it divided by lot, and to enter in and take possession. Joshua charged them with this, and directed them to appoint three men for each of the seven tribes, that they might be sent out to go through the land, and describe it according to the measure of their inheritance. "*According to their inheritance*," *i.e.* with special reference to the fact that seven tribes were to receive it for their inheritance. The description was not a formal measurement, although the art of surveying was well known in Egypt in ancient times, and was regularly carried out after the annual inundations of the Nile (*Herod.* ii. 109; *Strabo*, xvii. 787; *Diod. Sic.* i. 69); so that the Israelites might have learned it there. But כָּתַב does not mean to measure; and it was not a formal measurement that was required, for the purpose of dividing the land that yet remained into seven districts, since the tribes differed in numerical strength, and therefore the boundaries of the territory assigned them could not be settled till after the lots had been cast. The meaning of the word is to describe; and according to ver. 9, it was chiefly to the towns that reference was made: so that the description required by Joshua in all probability consisted simply in the preparation of

lists of the towns in the different parts of the land, with an account of their size and character; also with "notices of the quality and condition of the soil; what lands were fertile, and what they produced; where the country was mountainous, and where it was level; which lands were well watered, and which were dry; and any other things that would indicate the character of the soil, and facilitate a comparison between the different parts of the land" (*Rosenmüller*). The reasons which induced Joshua to take steps for the first time now for securing a survey of the land, are given in chap. xiv. 1. The men chosen for the purpose were able to carry out their task without receiving any hindrance from the Canaanites. For whilst the latter were crushed, if not exterminated, by the victories which the Israelites had gained, it was not necessary for the twenty-one Israelitish men to penetrate into every corner of the land, and every town that was still inhabited by the Canaanites, in order to accomplish their end.—Vers. 5, 6. "*And divide it into seven parts*," viz. for the purpose of casting lots. Judah, however, was still to remain in its land to the south, and Ephraim in its territory to the north. The seven portions thus obtained they were to bring to Joshua, that he might then cast the lot for the seven tribes "before the Lord," *i.e.* before the tabernacle (chap. xix. 51).—Ver. 7. There were only seven tribes that had still to receive their portions; for the tribe of Levi was to receive no portion in the land (*vid.* chap. xiii. xiv.), and Gad, Reuben, and half Manasseh had received their inheritance already on the other side of the Jordan.—Vers. 8, 9. Execution of this command.—Ver. 10. Joshua finishes the casting of the lots at Shiloh.

Vers. 11–28. INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.—Vers. 11–20. *Boundaries* of the inheritance.—Ver. 11. The territory of their lot (*i.e.* the territory assigned to the Benjaminites by lot) came out (through the falling out of the lot) between the sons of Judah and the sons of Joseph.—Vers. 12, 13. The *northern boundary* ("the boundary towards the north side") therefore coincided with the southern boundary of Ephraim as far as Lower Beth-horon, and has already been commented upon in the exposition of chap. xvi. 1–3. The *western boundary* follows in ver. 14. At Beth-horon the boundary curved round and turned southwards on the western side, namely from the mountain before (in front of) Beth-horon southwards; and "*the goings out thereof were at Kirjath-baal, which is Kirjath-jearim*," the town of the Judæans mentioned

in chap. xv. 60, the present *Kureyet el Enab* (see at chap. ix. 17).—Vers. 15–19. "*As for the southern boundary from the end of Kirjath-jearim onwards, the* (southern) *boundary went out on the west* (*i.e.* it started from the west), *and went out* (terminated) *at the fountain of the water of Nephtoah.*" Consequently it coincided with the northern boundary of Judah, as described in chap. xv. 5–9, except that it is given there from east to west, and here from west to east (see at chap. xv. 5–9). In the construction תּוֹצָאוֹתָיו הַגְּבוּל, the noun הַגְּבוּל is in apposition to the suffix: the outgoings of it, namely of the border (see *Ewald*, § 291, *b.*).—Ver. 20. The *eastern boundary* was the Jordan.

Vers. 21–28. The *towns* of Benjamin are divided into two groups. The *first* group (vers. 21–24) contains twelve towns in the eastern portion of the territory. *Jericho:* the present *Riha* (see at chap. ii. 1). *Beth-hoglah*, now *Ain Hajla* (see chap. xv. 6). *Emek-Keziz:* the name has been preserved in the Wady *el Kaziz*, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, on the south-east of the Apostle's Well (see *Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 328).—Ver. 22. *Beth-arabah:* see at chap. xv. 6. *Zemaraim*, probably the ruins of *es Sumrah*, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, to the east of Khan Hadhur, on *Van de Velde's* map. *Bethel:* now *Beitin* (see chap. vii. 2).—Ver. 23. *Avvim* (*i.e.* ruins) is unknown. *Phara* has been preserved in the ruins of *Fara*, on Wady Fara, three hours to the north-east of Jerusalem, and the same distance to the west of Jericho. *Ophrah* is mentioned again in 1 Sam. xiii. 17, but it is a different place from the *Ophrah* of Gideon in Manasseh (Judg. vi. 11, 24, viii. 27). According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Aphra*), it was a κώμη Ἀφρήλ in the time of *Eusebius* (*Jer. vicus Effrem*), five Roman miles to the east of Bethel; and according to *Van de Velde*, *v. Raumer*, and others, it is probably the same place as *Ephron* or *Ephrain*, which Abijah took from Jeroboam along with *Jeshanah* and *Bethel* (2 Chron. xiii. 19), also the same as *Ephraim*, the city to which Christ went when He withdrew into the desert (John xi. 54), as the *Onom.* (*s. v. Ephron*) speaks of a *villa prægrandis Ephræa nomine* (Ἐφραΐμ in *Euseb.*), although the distance given there, viz. twenty Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem, reaches far beyond the limits of Benjamin.—Ver. 24. *Chephar-haammonai* and *Ophni* are only mentioned here, and are still unknown. *Gaba*, or *Geba* of Benjamin (1 Sam. xiii. 16; 1 Kings xv. 22), which was given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 17; 1 Chron. vi. 45), was in the neighbourhood of Ramah (1 Kings xv. 22, 2 Chron. xvi. 6). It is mentioned in 2 Kings xxiii. 8, Zech.

xiv. 10, as the northern boundary of the kingdom of Judah, and was still inhabited after the captivity (Neh. vii. 30). It is a different place from *Gibea*, and is not to be found, as I formerly supposed, in the Moslem village of *Jibia*, by the Wady el Jib, between Beitin and Sinjil (*Rob.* iii. p. 80), but in the small village of *Jeba*, which is lying half in ruins, and where there are relics of antiquity, three-quarters of an hour to the north-east of er-Râm (Ramah), and about three hours to the north of Jerusalem, upon a height from which there is an extensive prospect (*vid. Rob.* ii. pp. 113 sqq.). This eastern group also included the two other towns *Anathoth* and *Almon* (chap. xxi. 18), which were given up by Benjamin to the Levites. *Anathoth*, the home of the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. i. 1, xi. 21 sqq.), which was still inhabited by Benjaminites after the captivity (Neh. xi. 32), is the present village of Anâta, where there are ruins of great antiquity, an hour and a quarter to the north of Jerusalem (*Rob.* ii. pp. 109 sqq.). *Almon*, called *Allemeth* in 1 Chron. vi. 45, has been preserved in the ruins of Almît (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 287 sqq.), or *el-Mid* (*Tobler*, Denkbl. p. 631), on the south-east of Anâta.—Vers. 25–28. The *second* group of fourteen towns in the western portion of Benjamin.—Ver. 25. *Gibeon*, the present *Jib:* see at chap. ix. 3. *Ramah*, in the neighbourhood of Gibeah and Geba (Judg. xix. 13; Isa. x. 29; 1 Kings xv. 17; Ezra ii. 26), most probably the *Ramah* of Samuel (1 Sam. i. 19, ii. 11, xxv. 1, xxviii. 3), is the present village of *er-Râm*, upon a mountain with ruins between Gibeon and Geba, half an hour to the west of the latter, two hours to the north of Jerusalem (see *Rob.* ii. p. 315). *Beeroth*, the present *Bireh:* see at chap. ix. 17.—Ver. 26. *Mizpeh*, commonly called *Mizpah*, where the war with Benjamin was decided upon (Judg. xx. xxi.), and where Samuel judged the people, and chose Saul as king (1 Sam. vii. 5 sqq., x. 17), was afterwards the seat of the Babylonian governor Gedaliah (2 Kings xxv. 23; Jer. xl. 6 sqq.). According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Massepha*), it was near Kirjath-jearim, and *Robinson* (ii. p. 139) is no doubt correct in supposing it to be the present *Neby Samvil* (*i.e.* prophet Samuel), an hour and a quarter to the east of Kureyet Enab (Kirjath-jearim), two hours to the north-west of Jerusalem, half an hour to the south of Gibeon, a place which stands like a watch-tower upon the highest point in the whole region, and with a mosque, once a Latin church, which is believed alike by Jews, Christians, and Mahometans to cover the tomb of the prophet Samuel (see *Rob.* ii. pp. 135 sqq.). *Chephirah, i.e. Kefir:* see

at chap. ix. 17. *Mozah* is only mentioned here, and is still unknown. Ver. 27. This also applies to *Rekem*, *Irpeel*, and *Taralah*.—Ver. 28. *Zelah*, the burial-place of Saul and his family (2 Sam. xxi. 14), is otherwise unknown. *Gibeath* or *Gibeah*, *i.e.* Gibeah of Benjamin, which was destroyed by the other tribes of Israel in the time of the judges, on account of the flagrant crime which had been committed there (Judg. xix. xx.), is also called *Gibeah of Saul*, as being the home and capital of Saul (1 Sam. x. 26, xi. 4, etc.), and was situated, according to Judg. xix. 13 and Isa. x. 29, between Jerusalem and Ramah, according to *Josephus* (Bell. Jud. v. 2, 1, 8) about twenty or thirty stadia from Jerusalem. These statements point to the *Tell* or *Tuleil el Phul*, *i.e.* bean-mountain, a conical peak about an hour from Jerusalem, on the road to er-Râm, with a large heap of stones upon the top, probably the ruins of a town that was built of unhewn stones, from which there is a very extensive prospect in all directions (*Rob.* ii. p. 317). Consequently modern writers have very naturally agreed in the conclusion, that the ancient Gibeah of Benjamin or Saul was situated either by the side of or upon this Tell (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 286; *Strauss*, Sinai, etc., p. 331, ed. 6; *v. Raumer*, Pal. p. 196). *Kirjath* has not yet been discovered, and must not be confounded with Kirjath-jearim, which belonged to the tribe of Judah (ver. 14; cf. chap. xv. 60).

## INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBES OF SIMEON, ZEBULUN, ISSACHAR, ASHER, NAPHTALI, AND DAN.—CHAP. XIX.

Vers. 1–9. The INHERITANCE OF SIMEON fell within the inheritance of the children of Judah, because the land allotted to them at Gilgal was larger than they required (ver. 9). Thus the curse pronounced upon Simeon by Jacob of dispersion in Israel (Gen. xlix. 7) was fulfilled upon this tribe in a very peculiar manner, and in a different manner from that pronounced upon Levi. The towns allotted to the tribe of Simeon are divided into two groups, the first (vers. 2–6) consisting of thirteen or fourteen towns, all situated in the Negeb (or south country); the second (ver. 7) of four towns, two of which were in the *Negeb* and two in the *shephelah*. All these eighteen towns have already been enumerated among the towns of Judah (chap. xv. 26–32, 42), and are mentioned again in 1 Chron. iv. 28–32, in just the same order, and with only slight differences in the spelling of some of the names. If the classification of the names in two groups might

seem to indicate that Simeon received a connected portion of land in Judah, this idea is overthrown at once by the circumstance that two of the four towns in the second group were in the south land and two in the lowland, and, judging from chap. xv. 32, 42, at a great distance from one another. At the same time, we cannot decide this point with any certainty, as the situation of several of the towns is still unknown.—Ver. 2. *Beersheba:* see at chap. xv. 28. *Sheba* is wanting in the Chronicles, but has no doubt been omitted through a copyist's error, as *Shema* answers to it in chap. xv. 26, where it stands before *Moladah* just as Sheba does here. —On the names in vers. 3–6*a*, see the exposition of chap. xv. 28–32.—The sum total given in ver. 6*b*, viz. thirteen towns, does not tally, as there are fourteen names. On these differences, see the remarks on chap. xv. 32 (p. 163, the note).—Ver. 7. *Ain* and *Rimmon* were in the south land (chap. xv. 32), *Ether* and *Ashan* in the lowlands (chap. xv. 42).—Vers. 8, 9. In addition to the towns mentioned, the Simeonites received all the villages round about the towns to *Baalath-beer*, the *Ramah* of *the south.* This place, up to which the territory of the Simeonites extended, though without its being actually assigned to the Simeonites, is simply called Baal in 1 Chron. iv. 33, and is probably the same as *Bealoth* in chap. xv. 24, though its situation has not yet been determined (see at chap. xv. 24). It cannot be identified, however, with *Ramet el Khulil*, an hour to the north of Hebron, which *Roediger* supposes to be the Ramah of the south, since the territory of Simeon, which was situated in the Negeb, and had only two towns in the *shephelah*, cannot possibly have extended into the mountains to a point on the north of Hebron. So far as the situation is concerned, *V. de Velde* would be more likely to be correct, when he identifies *Rama of the south* with Tell *Lekiyeh* on the north of Beersheba, if this conjecture only rested upon a better foundation than the untenable assumption, that Baalath-beer is the same as the Baalath of Dan in ver. 44.

Vers. 10–16. The INHERITANCE OF ZEBULUN fell above the plain of Jezreel, between this plain and the mountains of Naphtali, so that it was bounded by Asher on the west and north-west (ver. 27), by Naphtali on the north and north-east (ver. 34), and by Issachar on the south-east and south, and touched neither the Mediterranean Sea nor the Jordan. It embraced a very fertile country, however, with the fine broad plain of *el Buttauf*, the μέγα

πεδίον above Nazareth called *Asochis* in *Joseph. vita*, § 41, 45 (see *Rob.* iii. p. 189, Bibl. Res. pp. 105 sqq.; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 742, 758–9).—Ver. 10. "*And the boundary* (the territory) *of their inheritance was* (went) *to Sarid.*" This is no doubt the centre of the southern boundary, from which it is traced in a westerly direction in ver. 11, and in an easterly direction in ver. 12, in the same manner as in chap. xvi. 6. Unfortunately, *Sarid* cannot be determined with certainty. *Knobel's* opinion is, that the name, which signifies "hole" or "incision," after the analogy of שָׂרַד, *perforavit*, and שָׂרַט, *incidit*, does not refer to a town, but to some other locality, probably the southern opening of the deep and narrow wady which comes down from the basin of Nazareth, and is about an hour to the south-east of Nazareth, between two steep mountains (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 151–2; *Rob.* iii. p. 183). This locality appears suitable enough. But it is also possible that *Sarid* may be found in one of the two heaps of ruins on the south side of the *Mons præcipitii* upon *V. de Velde's* map (so called from Luke iv. 29).—Ver. 11. From this point "*the border went up westwards, namely to Mar'ala, and touched Dabbasheth, and still farther to the brook of Jokneam.*" If *Jokneam* of Carmel has been preserved in the Tell *Kaimûn* (see at chap. xii. 22), the brook before Jokneam is probably the Wady *el Milh*, on the eastern side of which, near the point where it opens into the plain, stands *Kaimûn*, and through which the road runs from Acca to Ramleh, as this wady separates Carmel from the small round hills which run to the south-east (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 114, and *V. de Velde*, i. p. 249). Here the boundaries of Zebulun and Asher met (ver. 27). *Mar'ala* and *Dabbasheth* are to be sought for between Kaimûn and Sarid. The *Cod. Vat.* has *Μαγελδά* instead of *Μαριλά*. Now, however little importance we can attach to the readings of the LXX. on account of the senseless way in which its renderings are made,—as, for example, in this very passage, where עַד־שָׂרִיד׃ וְעָלָה is rendered *Ἐσεδεκγώλα*,—the name *Magelda* might suggest a Hebrew reading *Magedlah* or *Mageldah*, and thus lead one to connect the place with the village of *Mejeidil* (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 114), or *Mshedil* (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 143), on the west of *Mons præcipitii*, though neither of these travellers visited the place, or has given us any minute description of it. Its situation upon a mountain would suit *Mar'ala*, to which the boundary went *up* from Sarid. In the case of *Dabbasheth*, the name, which signifies "lump" (see Isa. xxx. 6), points to a mountain. Upon this *Knobel* has founded the conjecture that *Gibeah*

or *Gibeath* took the place of this uncommon word, and that this is connected with the *Gabathon* of the *Onom.* (*juxta campum Legionis*), the present *Jebâta* between Mejeidil and Kaimûn, upon an isolated height on the edge of the mountains which skirt the plain of Jezreel, where there are signs of a remote antiquity (*Rob.* iii. p. 201, and Bibl. Res. p. 113; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. p. 700); although Tell *Thureh* (*i.e.* mountain) might be intended, a village upon a low and isolated hill a little farther south (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 116, and *Ritter, ut sup.*).—Ver. 12. "*And from Sarid the boundary turned eastwards toward the sun-rising to the territory of Chisloth-tabor, and went out to Dabrath, and went up to Japhia.*" *Chisloth-tabor, i.e.* according to *Kimchi's* explanation *lumbi Taboris* (French, *les flancs*), was at any rate a place on the side of Tabor, possibly the same as *Kesulloth* in ver. 18, as *Masius* and others suppose, and probably the same place as the *Xaloth* of *Josephus* (Bell. Jud. iii. 3, 1), which was situated in the "great plain," and the *vicus Chasalus* of the *Onom.* (*juxta montem Thabor in campestribus*), *i.e.* the present village of *Iksâl* or *Ksâl*, upon a rocky height on the west of Thabor, with many tombs in the rocks (*Rob.* iii. p. 182). *Dabrath*, a place in the tribe of Issachar that was given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 28; 1 Chron. vi. 57), called *Dabaritta* in *Josephus* (Bell. Jud. ii. 21, 3) and *Dabira* in the *Onom.* (*villula in monte Thabor*), the present *Deburieh*, an insignificant village which stands in a very picturesque manner upon a stratum of rock at the western foot of Tabor (*Rob.* iii. p. 210; *V. de Velde*, R. ii. p. 324). *Japhia* certainly cannot be the present *Hepha* or *Haifa* (*Khaifa*) on the Mediterranean, and near to Carmel (*Rel.* Pal. p. 826, and *Ges.* Thes. *s. v.*); but it is just as certain that it cannot be the present *Jafa*, a place half an hour to the south-west of Nazareth, as *Robinson* (Pal. iii. p. 200) and *Knobel* suppose, since the boundary was running eastwards, and cannot possibly have turned back again towards the west, and run from Deburieh beyond Sarid. If the positions assigned to Chisloth-tabor and Dabrath are correct, Japhia must be sought for on the east of Deburieh.—Ver. 13. "*From thence it went over towards the east to the sun-rising to Gath-hepher, to Eth-kazin, and went out to Rimmon, which is marked off to Neah.*" *Gath-hepher*, the home of the prophet Jonah (2 Kings xiv. 25), was "*haud grandis viculus Geth*" in the time of Jerome (see *prol. ad Jon.*). It was about two miles from Sephoris on the road to Tiberias, and the tomb of the prophet was shown there. It is the present village of *Meshed*, a place

about an hour and a quarter to the north of Nazareth (*Rob.* iii. p. 209; *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 312). *Eth-kazin* is unknown. *Rimmon*, a Levitical town (chap. xxi. 35; 1 Chron. vi. 62), has probably been preserved in the village of *Rummaneh*, about two hours and a half to the north of Nazareth (*Rob.* iii. p. 195). *Ham-methoar* is not a proper name, but the participle of תָּאַר, with the article in the place of the relative pronoun, "bounded off," or pricked off. *Neah* is unknown; it is possibly the same place as *Neiel* in the tribe of Asher (ver. 27), as *Knobel* supposes.—Ver. 14. "*And the boundary turned round it* (round Rimmon), *on the north to Channathon, and the outgoings thereof were the valley of Jiphtah-el.*" Judging from the words נָסַב and מֹצָאֹתָיו, this verse apparently gives the north-west boundary, since the last definition in ver. 13, "to Gath-hepher," etc., points to the eastern boundary. *Jiphtah-el* answers no doubt to the present *Jefât*, two hours and a half to the north of Sefurieh, and is the *Jotapata* which was obstinately defended by *Josephus* (Bell. Jud. iii. 7, 9: see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 104 sqq.). Consequently the valley of *Jiphtah-el*, at which Zebulun touched Asher (ver. 27), is probably "no other than the large Wady Abilîn, which takes its rise in the hills in the neighbourhood of Jefât" (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 107). And if this be correct, *Channathon* (LXX. *Ἐννααθώθ*) is probably *Cana* of Galilee, the home of Nathanael (John ii. 1, 11, iv. 46, xxi. 2), the present *Kana el Jelil*, between Rummaneh and Yefât, on the northern edge of the plain of Buttauf, upon a Tell, from which you overlook the plain, fully two hours and a half in a straight line from Nazareth, and directly north of that place, where there are many ruins found (see *Rob.* iii. p. 204; Bibl. Res. p. 108).—Ver. 15. The towns of *Zebulun* were the following. *Kattath*, probably the same as *Kitron*, which is mentioned in Judg. i. 30 in connection with Nahalol, but which is still unknown. *Nehalal*, or *Nahalol* (Judg. i. 30), is supposed by *V. de Velde* (Mem. p. 335), who follows Rabbi *Schwartz*, to be the present village of *Maalul*, a place with ruins on the south-west of Nazareth (see *Seetzen*, ii. p. 143; *Rob.* iii. App.; and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. p. 700). *Simron* is supposed by *Knobel* to be the village of *Semunieh* (see at chap. xi. 1). But neither of these is very probable. *Idalah* is supposed by *V. de Velde* to be the village of *Jeda* or *Jeida*, on the west of Semunieh, where are a few relics of antiquity, though *Robinson* (Bibl. Res. p. 113) states the very opposite. *Bethlehem* (of Zebulun), which many regard as the home of the judge Ibzan (Judg. xii. 8), has been preserved under the old name in a miser-

able village on the north of Jeida and Semunieh (see *Seetzen*, ii. p. 139; *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 113). The number of the towns is given as *twelve*, though only five are mentioned by name. It is true that some commentators have found the missing names in the border places mentioned in vers. 11–14, as, after deducting Chisloth-tabor and Dabrath, which belonged to Issachar, the names Sarid, Maralah, Dabbasheth, Japhia, Gittah-hepher, Eth-kazin, and Channathon give just seven towns. Nevertheless there is very little probability in this conjecture. For, in the first place, not only would it be a surprising thing to find the places mentioned as boundaries included among the towns of the territory belonging to the tribe, especially as some of the places so mentioned did not belong to Zebulun at all; but the copula *vav*, with which the enumeration of the towns commences, is equally surprising, since this is introduced in other cases with וְהָיוּ הֶעָרִים (וַיִּהְיוּ), *e.g.* chap. xviii. 21, xv. 21. And, in the second place, it is not a probable thing in itself, that, with the exception of the five towns mentioned in ver. 15, the other towns of Zebulun should all be situated upon the border. And lastly, the towns of *Kartah* and *Dimnah*, which Zebulun gave up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 34), are actually wanting. Under these circumstances, it is a natural conclusion that there is a gap in the text here, just as in chap. xv. 59 and xxi. 36.

Vers. 17–23. THE INHERITANCE OF ISSACHAR.—In this instance only towns are given, and the boundaries are not delineated, with the exception of the eastern portion of the northern boundary and the boundary line; at the same time, they may easily be traced from the boundaries of the surrounding tribes. Issachar received for the most part the large and very fertile plain of Jezreel (see at chap. xvii. 16, and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 689 sqq.), and was bounded on the south by Manasseh, on the west by Manasseh and Asher, on the north by Zebulun, and farther east by Naphtali also, and on the east by the Jordan.—Ver. 18. "*And their boundary was towards Jezreel*," *i.e.* their territory extended beyond Jezreel. *Jezreel*, the summer residence of Ahab and his house (1 Kings xviii. 45, 46, etc.), was situated upon a mountain, with an extensive and splendid prospect over the large plain that was called by its name. It was afterwards called *Esdraela*, a place described in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Jezreel*) as standing between Scythopolis and Legio; it is the present Zerîn, on the north-west of the mountains of Gilboa (see *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 155–6; *Rob.* iii. pp. 161 sqq.; *Van de Velde*, R. ii.

pp. 320 sqq.). *Chesulloth*, possibly the same as *Chisloth-tabor* (see at ver. 12). *Sunem*, the home of Abishag (1 Kings i. 3–15, etc.), also mentioned in 1 Sam. xxviii. 4 and 2 Kings iv. 8, was situated, according to the *Onom.*, five Roman miles (two hours) to the south of Tabor; it is the present *Solam* or *Sulem*, at the south-western foot of the Duhy or Little Hermon, an hour and a half to the north of Jezreel (see *Rob.* iii. pp. 170 sqq.; *Van de Velde*, R. ii. p. 323).—Ver. 19. *Haphraim*, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Aphraim*) *villa Affarœa*, six Roman miles to the north of Legio, is identified by *Knobel* with the village of *Afuleh*, on the west of Sulem, and more than two hours to the north-east of Lejun (*Rob.* iii. pp. 163, 181). *Sion*, according to the *Onom. villa juxta montem Thabor*, has not yet been discovered. *Anaharath* is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Na'urah*, on the eastern side of the Little Hermon (Bibl. Res. p. 337); but he regards the text as corrupt, and following the *Cod. Al.* of the LXX., which has Ῥενάθ and Ἀῤῥανέθ, maintains that the reading should be *Archanath*, to which *Arâneh* on the north of Jenin in the plain corresponds (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 156; *Rob.* iii. p. 157). But the circumstance that the *Cod. Al.* has two names instead of one makes its reading very suspicious.—Ver. 20. *Harabbit* is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Araboneh*, on the north-east of Arâneh, at the southern foot of Gilboa (*Rob.* iii. p. 157). *Kishion*, which was given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 28) and is erroneously written *Kedesh* in 1 Chron. vi. 57, is unknown. This also applies to *Abez* or *Ebez*, which is never mentioned again.—Ver. 21. *Remeth*, for which *Jarmuth* stands in the list of Levitical towns in chap. xxi. 29, and *Ramoth* in 1 Chron. vi. 58, is also unknown.[1] *En-gannim*, which was also allotted to the Levites (chap. xxi. 29; also 1 Chron. v. 58, where it is called *Anem*), has been associated by *Robinson* (iii. p. 155) with the Γιναία of *Josephus*, the present *Jenin*. The name *En-gannim* signifies fountain of gardens, and Jenin stands at the southern side of the plain of Jezreel in the midst of gardens

[1] *Knobel* imagines *Remeth*, whose name signifies height, to be the village of *Wezar*, on one of the western peaks of Gilboa (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 156; *Rob.* iii. p. 166, and Bibl. Res. p. 339), as the name also signifies "a lofty, inaccessible mountain, or a castle situated upon a mountain." This is certainly not impossible, but it is improbable. For this Mahometan village evidently derived its name from the fact that it has the appearance of a fortification when seen from a distance (see *Ritter*, Erdk. xv. p. 422). The name has nothing in common therefore with the Hebrew *Remeth*, and the travellers quoted by him say nothing at all about the ruins which he mentions in connection with *Wezar* (Wusar).

and orchards, which are watered by a copious spring (see *Seetzen*, ii. pp. 156 sqq.); "unless perhaps the place referred to is the heap of ruins called *Um el Ghanim*, on the south-east of Tabor, mentioned by *Berggren*, ii. p. 240, and *Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 142" (*Knobel*). *En-chadda* and *Beth-pazzez* are only mentioned here, and have not yet been discovered. According to *Knobel*, the former of the two may possibly be either the place by Gilboa called *Judeideh*, with a fountain named *Ain Judeideh* (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 337), or else *Beit-kad* or *Kadd* near Gilboa, mentioned by *Seetzen* (ii. p. 159) and *Robinson* (iii. p. 157).—Ver. 22. "*And the boundary touched Tabor, Sahazim, and Beth-shemesh.*" *Tabor* is not the mountain of that name, but a town upon the mountain, which was given to the Levites, though not by Issachar but by Zebulun (1 Chron. vi. 62), and was fortified afresh in the Jewish wars (*Josephus*, Bell. Jud. iv. 1, 8). In this passage, however, it appears to be reckoned as belonging to Issachar, since otherwise there are not sixteen cities named. At the same time, as there are several discrepancies between the numbers given and the names actually mentioned, it is quite possible that in this instance also the number sixteen is incorrect. In any case, Tabor was upon the border of Zebulun (ver. 12), so that it might have been allotted to this tribe. There are still the remains of old walls and ruins of arches, houses, and other buildings to be seen upon Mount *Tabor;* and round the summit there are the foundations of a thick wall built of large and to a great extent fluted stones (see *Rob.* iii. pp. 453 sqq.; *Seetzen*, ii. p. 148; *Buckingham*, Syr. i. pp. 83 sqq.). The places which follow are to be sought for on the east of Tabor towards the Jordan, as the boundary terminated at the Jordan. *Sachazim* (Shahazimah) *Knobel* connects with *el Hazetheh*, as the name, which signifies heights, points to a town situated upon hills; and *el Hazetheh* stands upon the range of hills, bounding the low-lying land of Ard el Hamma, which belonged to Naphtali. The reason is a weak one, though the situation would suit. There is more probability in the conjecture that *Beth-shemesh*, which remained in the hands of the Canaanites (Judg. i. 33), has been preserved in the ruined village of *Bessum* (*Rob.* iii. p. 237), and that this new name is only a corruption of the old one, like *Beth-shean* and *Beisan*. It is probable that the eastern portion of the northern boundary of Issachar, towards Naphtali, ran in a north-easterly direction from Tabor through the plain to Kefr Sabt, and thence to the Jordan along the Wady Bessum. It is not stated how far the territory of Issachar

ran down the valley of the Jordan (see the remarks on chap. xvii. 11, p. 182).

Vers. 24–31. THE INHERITANCE OF ASHER.—Asher received its territory along the Mediterranean Sea from Carmel to the northern boundary of Canaan itself. The description commences with the central portion, viz. the neighbourhood of *Acco* (ver. 25), going first of all towards the south (vers. 26, 27), and then to the north (vers. 28, 30).—Ver. 25. The territory of the Asherites was as follows. *Helkath*, which was given up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 31, and 1 Chron. vi. 75, where *Hukok* is an old copyist's error), is the present *Jelka*, three hours to the east of Acco (Akka: *Scholz*, Reise, p. 257), or *Jerka*, a Druse village situated upon an eminence, and judging from the remains, an ancient place (*Van de Velde*, R. i. p. 214; *Rob.* iii. App.). *Hali*, according to *Knobel* possibly *Julis*, between Jerka and Akka, in which case the present name arose from the form *Halit*, and *t* was changed into *s*. *Beten*, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v.* Βατνατ: *Bathne*) a *vicus Bethbeten*, eight Roman miles to the east of Ptolemais, has not yet been found. *Achshaph* is also unknown (see at chap. xi. 1). The *Onom.* (*s. v. Achsaph*) says nothing more about its situation than that it was *in tribu Aser*, whilst the statement made *s. v. Acsaph* (Ἀκσάφ), that it was *villula Chasalus* (κώμη Ἐξάδους), eight Roman miles from Diocæsarea *ad radicem montis Thabor*, leads into the territory of Zebulun.—Ver. 26. *Alammalech* has been preserved, so far as the name is concerned, in the Wady *Malek* or *Malik* (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 110), which runs into the Kishon, since in all probability the wady was named after a place either near it or within it. *Amad* is supposed by *Knobel* to be the present *Haifa*, about three hours to the south of Acre, on the sea, and this he identifies with the sycamore city mentioned by *Strabo* (xvi. 758), *Ptolemy* (v. 15, 5), and *Pliny* (*h. n.* v. 17), which was called *Epha* in the time of the Fathers (see *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 722 sqq.). In support of this he adduces the fact that the Hebrew name resembles the Arabic noun for sycamore,—an argument the weakness of which does not need to be pointed out. *Misheal* was assigned to the Levites (chap. xxi. 30, and 1 Chron. vi. 74, where it is called *Mashal*). According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Masan*) it was on the sea-coast near to Carmel, which is in harmony with the next clause, "*and reacheth to Carmel westwards, and to Shihor-libnath.*" *Carmel* (*i.e.* fruit-field), which has acquired celebrity from the history of Elijah (1 Kings

xviii. 17 sqq.), is a wooded mountain ridge which stretches in a north-westerly direction on the southern side of the Kishon, and projects as a promontory into the sea. Its name, "fruit-field," is well chosen; for whilst the lower part is covered with laurels and olive trees, the upper abounds in figs and oaks, and the whole mountain is full of the most beautiful flowers. There are also many caves about it (*vid. v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 43 sqq.; and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 705–6). The *Shihor-libnath* is not the *Belus*, or glass-river, in the neighbourhood of Acre, but is to be sought for on the south of Carmel, where Asher was bounded by Manasseh (chap. xvii. 10), *i.e.* to the south of Dor, which the Manassites received in the territory of Asher (chap. xvii. 11); it is therefore in all probability the *Nahr Zerka*, possibly the crocodile river of *Pliny* (*Reland*, Pal. p. 730), which is three hours to the south of Dor, and whose name (*blue*) might answer both to *shihor* (black) and *libnath* (white).—Ver. 27. From this point the boundary "*turned towards the east*," probably following the river Libnath for a short distance upwards, "*to Beth-dagon*," which has not yet been discovered, and must not be identified with Beit Dejan between Yafa and Ludd (Diospolis), "*and touched Zebulun and the valley of Jiphtah-el on the north of Beth-emek, and Nehiël, and went out on the left to Cabul*," *i.e.* on the northern side of it. The north-west boundary went from Zebulun into the valley of *Jiphtah-el*, *i.e.* the upper part of the Wady *Abilîn* (ver. 14). Here therefore the eastern boundary of Asher, which ran northwards from Wady Zerka past the western side of Issachar and Zebulun, touched the north-west corner of Zebulun. The two places, *Beth-emek* and *Nehiël* (the latter possibly the same as *Neah* in ver. 13), which were situated at the south of the valley of Jiphtah-el, have not been discovered; they may, however, have been upon the border of Zebulun and yet have belonged to Asher. *Cabul*, the κώμη Χαβωλώ of *Josephus* (Vit. § 43), in the district of Ptolemais, has been preserved in the village of *Kabul*, four hours to the south-east of Acre (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 88, and *Van de Velde*, R. i. p. 218).

In vers. 28–30 the towns and boundaries in the northern part of the territory of Asher, on the Phœnician frontier, are given, and the Phœnician cities Sidon, Tyre, and Achzib are mentioned as marking the boundary. First of all we have four towns in ver. 28, reaching as far as Sidon, no doubt in the northern district of Asher. *Ebron* has not yet been traced. As *Abdon* occurs among the towns

which Asher gave up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 30; 1 Chron. vi. 59), and in this verse also twenty MSS. have the reading Abdon, many writers, like *Reland* (Pal. p. 514), regard *Ebron* as a copyist's error for *Abdon*. This is possible enough, but it is by no means certain. As the towns of Asher are not all given in this list, since Acco, Achlab, and Helba (Judg. i. 31) are wanting, Abdon may also have been omitted. But we cannot attach any importance to the reading of the twenty MSS., as it may easily have arisen from chap. xxi. 30; and in addition to the Masoretic text, it has against it the authority of all the ancient versions, in which the reading *Ebron* is adopted. But even *Abdon* cannot be traced with certainty. On the supposition that *Abdon* is to be read for *Ebron*, *Knobel* connects it with the present *Abbadiyeh*, on the east of Beirut (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Ritter*, Erdk. xvii. pp. 477 and 710), or with *Abidat*, on the east (not the north) of Jobail (Byblus), mentioned by *Burckhardt* (Syr. p. 296) and *Robinson* (iii. App.); though he cannot adduce any other argument in support of the identity of Abdon with these two places, which are only known by name at present, except the resemblance in their names. On the supposition, however, that *Abdon* is not the same as *Ebron*, *Van de Velde's* conjecture is a much more natural one; namely, that it is to be found in the ruins of *Abdeh*, on the Wady Kurn, to the north of Acca. *Rehob* cannot be traced. The name occurs again in ver. 30, from which it is evident that there were two towns of this name in the territory of Asher (see at ver. 30). *Schultz* and *Van de Velde* connect it with the village of *Hamûl* by the wady of that name, between Ras el Abyad and Ras en Nakura; but this is too far south to be included in the district which reached to great Sidon. *Knobel's* suggestion would be a more probable one, namely, that it is connected with the village of *Hammana*, on the east of Beirut, in the district of *el Metn*, on the heights of Lebanon, where there is now a Maronite monastery (*vid. Seetzen*, i. p. 260; *Rob.* iii. App.; and *Ritter*, xvii. pp. 676 and 710), if it could only be shown that the territory of Asher reached as far to the east as this. *Kanah* cannot be the village of *Kâna*, not far from Tyre (*Rob.* iii. p. 384), but must have been farther north, and near to Sidon, though it has not yet been discovered. For the supposition that it is connected with the existing place called *Ain Kanieh* (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Ritter*, xvii. pp. 94 and 703), on the north of Jezzin, is overthrown by the fact that that place is too far to the east to be thought of in this connection; and neither *Robinson* nor *Ritter* makes any allusion to "Ain *Kana*, in the neighbourhood of

Jurjera, six hours to the south-east of Sidon," which *Knobel* mentions without quoting his authority, so that the existence of such a place is very questionable. On *Sidon*, now *Saida*, see at chap. xi. 8.—Ver. 29. "*And the boundary turned* (probably from the territory of Sidon) *to Ramah, to the fortified town of Zor.*" *Robinson* supposes that *Rama* is to be found in the village of *Rameh*, on the south-east of Tyre, where several ancient sarcophagi are to be seen (Bibl. Res. p. 63). "The fortified town of *Zor*," *i.e.* Tyre, is not the insular Tyre, but the town of Tyre, which was on the mainland, the present *Sur*, which is situated by the sea-coast, in a beautiful and fertile plain (see *Ritter*, Erdk. xvii. p. 320, and *Movers*, Phönizier, ii. 1, pp. 118 sqq.). "*And the boundary turned to Hosah, and the outgoings thereof were at the sea, by the side of the district of Achzib.*" *Hosah* is unknown, as the situation of *Kausah*, near to the Rameh already mentioned (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 61), does not suit in this connection. מֵחֶבֶל, *lit.* from the district, *i.e.* by the side of it. *Achzib*, where the Asherites dwelt with the Canaanites (Judg. i. 31, 32), is the *Ekdippa* of the Greeks and Romans, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Achziph*) nine Roman miles, or according to the *Itiner. Hieros.* p. 584, twelve miles to the north of Acco by the sea, the present *Zib*, a very large village, three good hours to the north of Acre,—a place on the sea-coast, with considerable ruins of antiquity (see *Ges.* Thes. p. 674; *Seetzen*, ii. p. 109; *Ritter*, xvi. pp. 811–12).—In ver. 30 three separate towns are mentioned, which were probably situated in the eastern part of the northern district of Asher, whereas the border towns mentioned in vers. 28 and 29 describe this district in its western half. *Ummah* (LXX. Ἀμμά) may perhaps have been preserved in *Kefr Ammeih*, upon the Lebanon, to the south of Hammana, in the district of Jurd (*Rob.* iii. App.; *Ritter*, xvii. p. 710). *Aphek* is the present *Afka* (see at chap. xiii. 4). *Rehob* cannot be traced with certainty. If it is *Hub*, as *Knobel* supposes, and the name *Hub*, which is borne by a Maronite monastery upon Lebanon, in the diocese of el-Jebail (to the north-east of Jebail), is a corruption of *Rehob*, this would be the northernmost town of Asher (see *Seetzen*, i. pp. 187 sqq., and *Ritter*, xvii. p. 791). The number "*twenty-two towns and their villages*" does not tally, as there are twenty-three towns mentioned in vers. 26–30, if we include Sidon, Tyre, and Achzib, according to Judg. i. 31, 32. The only way in which the numbers can be made to agree is to reckon *Nehiel* (ver. 27) as identical with Neah (ver. 13). But this point cannot be determined with certainty, as the Asherites received

other towns, such as Accó and Aclaph, which are wanting in this list, and may possibly have simply fallen out.

Vers. 32–39. THE INHERITANCE OF NAPHTALI.—This fell between Asher and the upper Jordan. It reached northwards to the northern boundary of Canaan, and touched Zebulun and Issachar on the south. In vers. 33 and 34 the boundary lines are given: viz. in ver. 33 the western boundary towards Asher, with the northern and eastern boundaries: in ver. 34 the southern boundary; but with the uncertainty which exists as to several of the places named, it cannot be traced with certainty.—Ver. 33. "*Its boundary was* (its territory reached) *from Heleph, from the oak-forest at Zaanannim, and Adami Nekeb* and *Jabneel* to *Lakkum; and its outgoings were the Jordan.*" *Heleph* is unknown, though in all probability it was to the south of Zaanannim, and not very far distant. According to Judg. iv. 11, the *oak-forest* (*allon:* see the remarks on Gen. xii. 6) at *Zaanannim* was near *Kedesh*, on the north-west of Lake Huleh. There are still many oaks in that neighbourhood (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 386); and on the south of Bint Jebail *Robinson* crossed a low mountain-range which was covered with small oak trees (Pal. iii. p. 372). *Adami hannekeb, i.e.* Adami of the pass (*Nekeb*, judging from the analogy of the Arabic, signifying *foramen, via inter montes*), is supposed by *Knobel* to be *Deir-el-ahmar, i.e.* red cloister, a place which is still inhabited, three hours to the north-west of Baalbek, on the pass from the cedars to Baalbek (*Seetzen*, i. pp. 181, 185; *Burckhardt*, Syr. p. 60; and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvii. p. 150), so called from the reddish colour of the soil in the neighbourhood, which would explain the name *Adami*. *Knobel* also connects *Jabneel* with the lake *Jemun, Jemuni*, or *Jammune*, some hours to the north-west of Baalbek, on the eastern side of the western Lebanon range (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 548; *Ritter*, xvii. pp. 304 sqq.), where there are still considerable ruins of a very early date to be found, especially the ruins of an ancient temple and a celebrated place of pilgrimage, with which the name "God's building" agrees. And lastly, he associates *Lakkum* with the mountains of *Lokham*, as the northern part of Lebanon on the Syrian mountains, from the latitude of Laodicea to that of Antioch on the western side of the Orontes, is called by the Arabian geographers *Isztachri, Abulfeda*, and others. So far as the names are concerned, these combinations seem appropriate enough, but they are hardly tenable. The resemblance between the names *Lakkum* and *Lokham*

is only in appearance, as the Hebrew name is written with ק and the Arabic with ב. Moreover, the mountains of Lokham are much too far north for the name to be adduced as an explanation of Lakkum. The interpretation of *Adami Nekeb* and *Jabneel* is also irreconcilable with the circumstance that the lake *Jamun* was two hours to the west of the red convent, so that the boundary, which starts from the west, and is drawn first of all towards the north, and then to the north-east and east, must have run last of all from the red convent, and not from the Jamun lake to the Jordan. As *Jabneel* is mentioned after *Adami Nekeb*, it must be sought for to the east of Adami Nekeb, whereas the Jamun lake lies in the very opposite direction, namely, directly to the west of the red convent. The three places mentioned, therefore, cannot be precisely determined at present. The Jordan, where the boundary of Asher terminated, was no doubt the upper Jordan, or rather the *Nahr Hasbany*, one of the sources of the Jordan, which formed, together with the Huleh lake and the Jordan itself, between Lake Huleh and the Sea of Tiberias, and down to the point where it issues from the latter, the eastern boundary of Asher.—Ver. 34. From the Jordan below the Lake of Tiberias, or speaking more exactly, from the point at which the Wady *Bessum* enters the Jordan, "*the boundary* (of Asher) *turned westwards to Asnoth-tabor, and went thence out to Hukkok.*" This boundary, *i.e.* the southern boundary of Asher, probably followed the course of the Wady *Bessum* from the Jordan, which wady was the boundary of Issachar on the north-east, and then ran most likely from *Kefr Sabt* (see at ver. 22) to *Asnoth-tabor, i.e.*, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Azanoth*), a *vicus ad regionem Diocœsareæ pertinens in campestribus*, probably on the south-east of *Diocœsarea, i.e. Sepphoris*, not far from Tabor, to which the boundary of Issachar extended (ver. 22). *Hukkok* has not yet been traced. *Robinson* (Bibl. Res. p. 82) and *Van de Velde* (Mem. p. 322) are inclined to follow *Rabbi Parchi* of the fourteenth century, and identify this place with the village of *Yakûk*, on the north-west of the Lake of Gennesareth; but this village is too far to the north-east to have formed the terminal point of the southern boundary of Naphtali, as it ran westwards from the Jordan. After this Naphtali touched "*Zebulun on the south, Asher on the west, and Judah by the Jordan toward the sun-rising or east.*" "The Jordan" is in apposition to "Judah," in the sense of "Judah of the Jordan," like "Jordan of Jericho" in Num. xxii. 1, xxvi. 3, etc. The Masoretic pointing, which separates these two words, was founded upon some

false notion respecting this definition of the boundary, and caused the commentators great perplexity, until *C. v. Raumer* succeeded in removing the difficulty, by showing that the district of the sixty towns of Jair, which was upon the eastern side of the Jordan, is called Judah here, or reckoned as belonging to Judah, because Jair, the possessor of these towns, was a descendant of Judah on the father's side through Hezron (1 Chron. ii. 5, 21, 22); whereas in chap. xiii. 30, and Num. xxxii. 41, he is reckoned *contra morem, i.e.* against the rule laid down in Num. xxxvi. 7, as a descendant of Manasseh, on account of his descent from Machir the Manassite, on his mother's side.[1]

Vers. 35 sqq. The fortified towns of Naphtali were the following. *Ziddim:* unknown, though *Knobel* suggests that "it may possibly be preserved in *Chirbet es Saudeh*, to the west of the southern extremity of the Lake of Tiberias (*Rob.* iii. App.);" but this place is to the west of the Wady Bessum, *i.e.* in the territory of Issachar. *Zer* is also unknown. As the LXX. and Syriac give the name as *Zor*, *Knobel* connects it with *Kerak*, which signifies fortress as well as *Zor* (= מָצוֹר), a heap of ruins at the southern end of the lake (*Rob.* iii. p. 263), the place which *Josephus* calls *Taricheæ* (see *Reland*, p. 1026),—a very doubtful combination! *Hammath* (*i.e. thermæ*), a Levitical town called *Hammoth-dor* in chap. xxi. 32, and *Hammon* in 1 Chron. vi. 61, was situated, according to statements in the Talmud, somewhere near the later city of Tiberias, on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth, and was no doubt identical with the κώμη Ἀμμαούς in the neighbourhood of Tiberias, a place with warm baths (*Jos.* Ant. xviii. 2, 3; Bell. Jud. iv. 1, 3). There are warm springs still to be found half an hour to the south of Tabaria, which are used as baths (*Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 573–4; *Rob.* iii. pp. 258 sqq.). *Rakkath* (according to the *Talm.* and *Rabb. ripa littus*) was situated, according to rabbinical accounts, in the immediate neighbourhood of Hammath, and was the same place as *Tiberias;* but the account given by *Josephus* (Ant. xviii. 2, 3; cf. Bell. Jud. ii. 9, 1) respecting the founding of *Tiberias* by Herod the tetrarch is at variance with this; so that the rabbinical statements appear to have no other foundation than the etymology of the name

[1] See *C. v. Raumer's* article on "Judæa on the east of Jordan," in *Tholuck's litt. Anz.* 1834, Nos. 1 and 2, and his Palästina, pp. 233 sqq. ed. 4; and for the arbitrary attempts that had been made to explain the passage by alterations of the text and in other ways, see *Rosenmüller's Bibl. Alterthk.* ii. 1, pp. 301–2; and *Keil's* Comm. on Joshua, pp. 438–9.

*Rakkath*. *Chinnereth* is given in the Targums as גִּנֵּיסַר, גִּינוֹסַר, גִּנּוֹסַר, *i.e.* Γεννησάρ. According to *Josephus* (Bell. Jud. iii. 10, 8), this name was given to a strip of land on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, which was distinguished for its natural beauty, its climate, and its fertility, namely the long plain, about twenty minutes broad and an hour long, which stretches along the western shore of this lake, from el-Mejdel on the south to Khan Minyeh on the north (*Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 558–9; *Rob.* iii. pp. 279, 290). It must have been in this plain that the town of *Chinnereth* stood, from which the plain and lake together derived the name of *Chinnereth* (Deut. iii. 17) or *Chinneroth* (chap. xi. 2), and the lake alone the name of "Sea of Chinnereth," or "Sea of Chinneroth" (chap. xii. 3, xiii. 27; Num. xxxiv. 11).—Ver. 36. *Adamah* is unknown. *Knobel* is of opinion, that as *Adamah* signifies red, the place referred to may possibly be *Ras el Ahmar*, *i.e. red-head*, on the north of Safed (*Rob.* iii. p. 370; Bibl. Res. p. 69). *Ramah* is the present *Rameh* (*Ramea*), a large well-built village, inhabited by Christians and Druses, surrounded by extensive olive plantations, and provided with an excellent well. It stands upon the slope of a mountain, in a beautiful plain on the south-west of Safed, but without any relics of antiquity (see *Seetzen*, ii. p. 129; *Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 78–9). *Hazor* has not yet been traced with certainty (see at chap. xi. 1).—Ver. 37. *Kedesh* (see at chap. xii. 2). *Edrei*, a different place from the town of the same name in Bashan (chap. i. 2, 4), is still unknown. *En-hazor* is probably to be sought for in *Tell Hazur* and *Ain Hazur*, which is not very far distant, on the south-west of Rameh, though the ruins upon *Tell Hazur* are merely the ruins of an ordinary village, with one single cistern that has fallen to pieces (*Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 80, 81).—Ver. 38. *Jireon* (*Iron*) is probably the present village of *Jarûn*, an hour to the south-east of Bint-Jebeil, with the ruins of an ancient Christian church (*Seetzen*, ii. pp. 123–4; *Van de Velde*, R. i. p. 133). *Migdal-el*, so far as the name is concerned, might be *Magdala* (Matt. xv. 39), on the western shore of the Lake of Gennesareth, between Capernaum and Tiberias (*Rob.* iii. pp. 279 sqq.); the only difficulty is, that the towns upon this lake have already been mentioned in ver. 35. *Knobel* connects *Migdal-el* with *Chorem*, so as to form one name, and finds *Migdal el Chorem* in the present *Mejdel Kerum*, on the west of Rameh (*Seetzen*, ii. p. 130; *Van de Velde*, i. p. 215), a common Mahometan village. But there is nothing to favour this combination, except the similarity in sound between the two names; whereas it has against it not only the situation of the village, which

was so far to the west, being not more than three hours from Acca, that the territory of Naphtali can hardly have reached so far, but also the very small resemblance between *Chorem* and *Kerum*, not to mention the fact that the accents separate *Chorem* from *Migdal-el*, whilst the omission of the copula (*vav*) before *Chorem* cannot have any weight, as the copula is also wanting before *Zer* and *Rakkath*. *Chorem* and *Beth-anath* have not yet been discovered. From the latter place Naphtali was unable to expel the Canaanites (Judg. i. 33). *Beth-shemesh*, a different place from the town of the same name in Issachar (ver. 22), is also still unknown. The total number of towns is given as nineteen, whereas only sixteen are mentioned by name. It is hardly correct to seek for the missing places among the border towns mentioned in vers. 33 and 34, as the enumeration of the towns themselves is introduced by וְעָרֵי מִבְצָר in ver. 35, and in this way the list of towns is separated from the description of the boundaries. To this we may add, that the town of Karthan or Kirjathaim, which Naphtali gave up to the Levites (chap. xxi. 32; 1 Chron. vi. 61), does not occur either among the border towns or in the list of towns, from which we may see that the list of towns is an imperfect one.

Vers. 40-48. THE INHERITANCE OF THE TRIBE OF DAN.—This fell to the west of Benjamin, between Judah and Ephraim, and was formed by Judah giving up some of its northern towns, and Ephraim some of its southern towns, to the Danites, so as to furnish them with a territory proportionate to their number. It was situated for the most part in the lowland (*shephelah*), including, however, the hill country between the Mediterranean and the mountains, and extended over a portion of the plain of Sharon, so that it belonged to one of the most fruitful portions of Palestine. The boundaries are not given, because they could be traced from those of the adjoining territories.—Ver. 41. From Judah the families of Dan received *Zorea* and *Eshtaol* (see at chap. xv. 33), and *Ir-shemesh*, also called *Beth-shemesh* (1 Kings iv. 9), on the border of Judah (see chap. xv. 10); but of these the Danites did not take possession, as they were given up by Judah to the Levites (chap. xxi. 16: see at chap. xv. 10). *Saalabbin*, or *Saalbim*, which remained in the hands of the Canaanites (Judg. i. 35), is frequently mentioned in the history of David and Solomon (2 Sam. xxiii. 32; 1 Chron. xi. 33; 1 Kings iv. 9). It may possibly be the present *Selbît* (*Rob.* iii. App.; Bibl. Res. p. 144), some distance to the north

of the three places mentioned (*Knobel*). *Ajalon*, which was also not taken from the Canaanites (Judg. i. 35), was assigned to the Levites (chap. xxi. 24; 1 Chron. vi. 54). It is mentioned in the wars with the Philistines (1 Sam. xiv. 31; 1 Chron. viii. 13), was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 10), and was taken by the Philistines from King Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 18). It has been preserved in the village of *Yalo* (see at chap. x. 12). *Jethlah* is only mentioned here, and has not yet been discovered. So far as the name is concerned, it may possibly be preserved in the Wady *Atallah*, on the west of *Yalo* (Bibl. Res. pp. 143–4).—Ver. 43. *Elon*, which is mentioned again in 1 Kings iv. 9, with the addition of *Beth-hanan*, has not yet been traced; according to *Knobel*, it "may possibly be *Ellin*, near Timnath and Beth-shemesh, mentioned by *Robinson* in his Pal. vol. iii. App." *Thimna* (*Thimnathah*) and *Ekron*, on the boundary of Judah (see at chap. xv. 10, 11).—Ver. 44. *Eltekeh* and *Gibbethon*, which were allotted to the Levites (chap. xxi. 23), have not yet been discovered. Under the earliest kings of Israel, *Gibbethon* was in the hands of the Philistines (1 Kings xv. 27, xvi. 15, 17). *Baalath* was fortified by Solomon (1 Kings ix. 18). According to *Josephus* (Ant. viii. 6, 1), it was "*Baleth in the neighbourhood of Geser*;" probably the same place as *Baalah*, on the border of Judah (chap. xv. 11).—Ver. 45. *Jehud* has probably been preserved in the village of *Jehudieh* (*Hudieh*), two hours to the north of Ludd (Diospolis), in a splendidly cultivated plain (*Berggren*, R. iii. p. 162; *Rob.* iii. p. 45, and App.). *Bene-berak*, the present *Ibn Abrak*, an hour from Jehud (*Scholz*, R. p. 256). *Gath-rimmon*, which was given to the Levites (chap. xxi. 24; 1 Chron. vi. 54), is described in the *Onom.* (*s. v.*) as *villa prægrandis in duodecimo milliario Diospoleos pergentibus Eleutheropolin*,—a statement which points to the neighbourhood of Thimnah, though it has not yet been discovered.—Ver. 46. *Me-jarkon, i.e. aquæ flavedinis*, and *Rakkon*, are unknown; but from the clause which follows, "*with the territory before Japho*," it must have been in the neighbourhood of Joppa (Jaffa). "*The territory before Japho*" includes the places in the environs of Joppa. Consequently *Joppa* itself does not appear to have belonged to the territory of Dan, although, according to Judg. v. 17, the Danites must have had possession of this town. *Japho*, the well-known port of Palestine (2 Chron. ii. 15; Ezra iii. 7; Jonah i. 3), which the Greeks called Ἰόππη (Joppa), the present *Jaffa* (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 204–5, and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 574 sqq.).—Ver. 47. Besides this inheritance, the Danites

of Zorea and Eshtaol went, after Joshua's death, and conquered the town of *Leshem* or *Laish*, on the northern boundary of Canaan, and gave it the name of *Dan*, as the territory which was allotted to them under Joshua was too small for them, on account of their inability to drive out the Amorites from several of their towns (Judg. i. 34, 35, xviii. 2). For further particulars concerning this conquest, see Judg. xviii. *Leshem* or *Laish* (Judg. xviii. 7, 27), *i.e.* *Dan*, which the *Onom.* describes as *viculus quarto a Paneade milliario euntibus Tyrum*, was the present *Tell el Kadi*, or *el Leddan*, the central source of the Jordan, to the west of Banjas, a place with ancient ruins (see *Rob.* iii. p. 351; Bibl. Res. pp. 390, 393). It was there that Jeroboam set up the golden calves (1 Kings xii. 29, 30, etc.); and it is frequently mentioned as the northernmost city of the Israelites, in contrast with Beersheba, which was in the extreme south of the land (Judg. xx. 1; 1 Sam. iii. 20; 2 Sam. iii. 10: see also *Ritter*, Erdk. xv. pp. 207 sqq.).

Vers. 49–51. *Conclusion of the Distribution of the Land.*—Vers. 49, 50. When the land was distributed among the tribes according to its territories, the Israelites gave Joshua an inheritance in the midst of them, according to the command of Jehovah, namely the town of *Timnath-serah*, upon the mountains of Ephraim, for which he asked, and which he finished building; and there he dwelt until the time of his death (chap. xxiv. 30; Judg. ii. 9). "*According to the word of the Lord*" (*lit.* "at the mouth of Jehovah") does not refer to a divine oracle communicated through the high priest, but to a promise which Joshua had probably received from God at the same time as Caleb, viz. in Kadesh, but which, like the promise given to Caleb, is not mentioned in the Pentateuch (see at chap. xv. 13, xiv. 9). *Timnath-serah*, called *Timnath-heres* in Judg. ii. 9, must not be confounded with *Timnah* in the tribe of Dan (ver. 43, chap. xv. 10), as is the case in the *Onom.* It has been preserved in the present ruins and foundation walls of a place called *Tibneh*, which was once a large town, about seven hours to the north of Jerusalem, and two hours to the west of Jiljilia, standing upon two mountains, with many caverns that have been used as graves (see *Eli Smith* in *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 562 sqq., and *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 141).—Ver. 51. Closing formula to the account of the distribution of the land, which refers primarily to chap. xviii. 1 sqq., as the expression "*in Shiloh*" shows, but which also includes chap. xiv.–xvii.

SELECTION OF CITIES OF REFUGE, OR FREE CITIES.—CHAP. XX.

After the distribution of the land by lot among the tribes of Israel, six towns were set apart, in accordance with the Mosaic instructions in Num. xxxv., as places of refuge for unintentional manslayers. Before describing the appointment and setting apart of these towns, the writer repeats in vers. 1–6 the main points of the Mosaic law contained in Num. xxxv. 9–29 and Deut. xix. 1–13, with reference to the reception of the manslayers into these towns. תְּנוּ לָכֶם, "*give to you*," *i.e.* appoint for yourselves, "*cities of refuge*," etc. In ver. 6, the two regulations, "*until he stand before the congregation for judgment*," and "*until the death of the high priest*," are to be understood, in accordance with the clear explanation given in Num. xxxv. 24, 25, as meaning that the manslayer was to live in the town till the congregation had pronounced judgment upon the matter, and either given him up to the avenger of blood as a wilful murderer, or taken him back to the city of refuge as an unintentional manslayer, in which case he was to remain there till the death of the existing high priest. For further particulars, see at Num. xxxv.—Vers. 7–9. *List of the cities:* Levitical cities were chosen, for the reasons explained in the Commentary on the Pentateuch, iii. p. 262.—Ver. 7. In the land on this side (viz. Canaan) they sanctified the following cities. In the *north*, *Kedesh* (see at chap. xii. 22), in *Galil*, on the mountains of Naphtali. *Galil* (a circle) was a district in the northern part of the subsequent province of Galilee; it is called גְּלִיל הַגּוֹיִם, circle of the heathen, in Isa. viii. 23, because an unusually large number of heathen or Gentiles were living there. In the centre of the land, *Shechem*, upon the mountains of Ephraim (see at chap. xvii. 7). And in the south, *Kirjath-arba, i.e.* Hebron, upon the mountains of Judah (see at chap. x. 3).—Ver. 8. The cities in the land on the other side had already been appointed by Moses (Deut. iv. 41–43). For the sake of completeness, they are mentioned here again: viz. *Bezer*, *Ramoth in Gilead*, and *Golan* (see at Deut. iv. 43). The subject is brought to a close in ver. 9. עָרֵי הַמּוֹעֲדָה signifies neither *urbes congregationis* (*Kimchi*) nor *urbes asyli* (*Gesenius*), but cities of appointment,—those which received the appointment already given and repeated again in what follows.

## APPOINTMENT OF TOWNS FOR THE PRIESTS AND LEVITES.—CHAP. XXI.

Vers. 1–3. After the cities of refuge had been set apart, the towns were also selected, which the different tribes were to give up for the priests and Levites to dwell in according to the Mosaic instructions in Num. xxxv. 1–8, together with the necessary fields as pasturage for their cattle. The setting apart of the cities of refuge took place before the appointment of the Levitical towns, because the Lord had given commandment through Moses in Num. xxxv. 6, that they were to give to the Levites the six cities of refuge, and forty-two cities besides, *i.e.* forty-eight cities in all. From the introductory statement in vers. 1, 2, that the heads of the fathers (see Ex. vi. 14, 25) of the Levitical families reminded the distribution committee at Shiloh of the command of God that had been issued through Moses, that towns were to be given them to dwell in, we cannot infer, as *Calvin* has done, that the Levites had been forgotten, till they came and asserted their claims. All that is stated in these words is, "that when the business had reached that point, they approached the dividers of the land in the common name of the members of their tribe, to receive by lot the cities appointed for them. They simply expressed the commands of God, and said in so many words, that they had been deputed by the Levites generally to draw lots for those forty-eight cities with their suburbs, which had been appointed for that tribe" (*Masius*). The clause appended to *Shiloh*, "*in the land of Canaan*," points to the instructions in Num. xxxiv. 29 and xxxv. 10, to give the children of Israel their inheritance *in the land of Canaan.*

Vers. 4–8. *Number of the cities* which the different families of Levi received from each tribe. The tribe of Levi was divided into three branches,—the Gershonites, the Kohathites, and the Merarites (see Num. iii. and Ex. vi. 16–19). The Kohathites again were divided into the four families of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel (Ex. vi. 18); and the family of Amram into two lines, consisting of the descendants of Moses and Aaron (Ex. vi. 20). The priesthood was committed to the line of Aaron (Num. xviii. 1–7); but the other descendants of Amram, *i.e.* the descendants of Moses, were placed on a par with the other descendants of Levi, and numbered among the simple Levites (Num. iii.; 1 Chron. v. 27–vi. 34). The towns in which the different families of Levi were to dwell were determined by lot; but in all probability the towns

which each tribe was to give up to them were selected first of all, so that the lot merely decided to which branch of the Levites each particular town was to belong.—Ver. 4. The first lot came out for the families of Kohath, and among these again for the sons of Aaron, *i.e.* the priests. They received thirteen towns from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. "This did not happen by chance; but God, according to His wonderful counsel, placed them just in that situation which He had determined to select for His own temple" (*Calvin*).—Ver. 5. The rest of the Kohathites, *i.e.* the descendants of Moses, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, received ten towns from Ephraim, Dan, and half Manasseh.—Ver. 6. The Gershonites received thirteen towns from Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and half Manasseh in Bashan.—Ver. 7. The Merarites received twelve towns from Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

The number of towns thus assigned to the Levites will not appear too large, if we consider, (1) that judging from the number of towns in so small a land, the greater part of them cannot have been very large; (2) that the Levites were not the sole possessors of these towns, but simply received the number of dwelling-houses which they actually required, with meadow land for their cattle in the suburbs of the towns, whilst the rest of the space still belonged to the different tribes; and (3) that if the 23,000 males, the number of the Levites at the second census which was taken in the steppes of Moab, were distributed among the thirty-five towns, it would give 657 males, or 1300 male and female Levites for every town. On the other hand, offence has been taken at the statement, that thirteen towns were given up to the priests; and under the idea that Aaron could hardly have had descendants enough in Joshua's time from his two sons who remained alive to fill even two towns, to say nothing of thirteen, the list has been set down as a document which was drawn up at a much later date (*Maurer*, etc.). But any one who takes this ground not only attributes to the distribution commission the enormous shortsightedness of setting apart towns for the priests merely to meet their existing wants, and without any regard to the subsequent increase which would take place in their numbers, but he also forms too large an estimate of the size of the towns, and too small an estimate of the number of the priests. Moreover, it was never intended that the towns should be filled with priests' families; and the number of priests alive at that time is not mentioned anywhere. But if we bear in mind that Aaron died in the fortieth year of the journeys

of the Israelites, at the age of 123 years (Num. xxxiii. 38), and therefore was eighty-three years old at the time of the exodus from Egypt, his descendants might have entered upon the fourth generation seven years after his death. Now his two sons had twenty-four male descendants, who were the founders of the twenty-four classes instituted by David (1 Chron. xxiv.). And if we only reckon six males to each of the next generations, there would be 144 in the third generation, who would be between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five when the distribution of the land took place, and who might therefore have had 864 male children living at that time; so that the total number of males in the families of the priests might have amounted to more than 1000, that is to say, might have consisted of at least 200 families.

Vers. 9–42. *Names of the Levitical Towns.*[1]—Vers. 9–19. *The priests' towns:* (*a*) in Judah and Simeon (vers. 9–16); (*b*) in Benjamin (vers. 17–19).—Vers. 9 sqq. In the tribe of Judah the priests received *Kirjath-arba*, or *Hebron*, with the necessary pasturage round about the town (see Num. xxxv. 2), whilst the field of the town with the villages belonging to it remained in the hands of Caleb and his family as their possession (chap. xiv. 12 sqq.).—Ver. 13 contains a repetition of ver. 11, occasioned by the parenthetical remark in ver. 12. They also received *Libnah* in the lowland (see chap. xv. 42, x. 29); *Jattir* (chap. xv. 48), *Eshtemoah*

[1] There is a similar list in 1 Chron. vi. 54–81, though in some respects differently arranged, and with many variations in the names, and corruptions of different kinds in the text, which show that the author of the Chronicles has inserted an ancient document that was altogether independent of the book before us. Thus in the Chronicles there are only forty-two towns mentioned by name instead of forty-eight, although it is stated in vers. 45 sqq. that 13 + 10 + 13 + 12, *i.e.* forty-eight towns in all, were given up to the Levites. The names omitted are (1) Jutta in Judah; (2) Gibeon in Benjamin; (3 and 4) Ethekeh and Gibbethon in Dan; (5 and 6) and Jokneam and Nahalal in Zebulun (compare vers. 16, 17, 23, 34, and 35, with 1 Chron. vi. 59, 60, 68, 77. In some cases also the author of the Chronicles gives different names, though some of them indeed are only different forms of the same name, *e.g.* Hilen for Holon, Alemeth for Almon, Ashtaroth for Beeshterah, Mashal for Misheal, Hammon for Hammoth-dor, Kirjathaim for Kartan (compare 1 Chron. vi. 58, 60, 71, 74, 76, with Josh. xxi. 15, 18, 27, 30, 32); or in some cases possibly different names of the same town, *e.g.* Jokmeam for Kibzaim, and Ramoth for Jarmuth, and Anem for En-gannim (1 Chron. vi. 68, 83, and Josh. xxi. 22, 29); whilst some evidently give the true reading, viz. Ashan for Ain, and Bileam for Gath-rimmon (1 Chron. vi. 59, 70; Josh. xxi. 16, 25). The majority, however, are faulty readings, viz. Aner for Tanach, Kedesh for Kishon, Hukok for Helkath, Rimmon and Tabor (compare 1 Chron. vi. 70, 72, 75, 77, with Josh. xxi 25, 28, 31, 34, 35).

(chap. xv. 50), *Holon* (chap. xv. 51), and *Debir* (chap. xv. 15, 49, x. 38) on the mountains of Judah; *Ain*, for which we should read *Ashan* (1 Chron. vi. 44; cf. chap. xv. 42), in the tribe of Simeon (chap. xix. 7); *Juttah* on the mountains (chap. xv. 55); and *Beth-shemesh* in the lowland (chap. xv. 10).—Vers. 17 sqq. In the tribe of Benjamin they received *Gibeon* (see chap. ix. 3), *Geba* (chap. xviii. 24), also *Anathoth* and *Almon*, which are missing in the list of the towns of Benjamin (see at chap. xviii. 24).—Vers. 20–42. *Towns of the Levites.*—Vers. 20–26. The other *Kohathites* received four towns from the tribe of Ephraim (vers. 21, 22), four from Dan (vers. 23, 24), and two from the half tribe of Manasseh on this side of the Jordan (ver. 25). From Ephraim they received *Shechem* (see chap. xvii. 7), *Gezer* (chap. x. 33), *Kibzaim*—for which we find *Jockmeam* in 1 Chron. vi. 68, possibly a different name for the same place, which has not yet been discovered—and *Beth-horon*, whether Upper or Lower is not stated (see chap. x. 10). From Dan they received *Elthekeh* and *Gibbethon* (chap. xix. 44), *Ajalon* and *Gath-rimmon* (chap. xix. 42, 45). From half Manasseh they received *Taanach* (chap. xvii. 11, xii. 21) and *Gath-rimmon*—this is evidently a copyist's error, occasioned by the wandering of the eye to the previous verse, for *Bileam* (1 Chron. vi. 70), *i.e. Jibleam* (chap. xvii. 11).—Ver. 26. Thus they received ten towns in all.—Vers. 27–33. The *Gershonites* received two towns from eastern Manasseh: *Golan* (chap. xx. 8; Deut. iv. 43), and Beeshterah. *Beeshterah* (contracted from *Beth-eshterah*, the house of Astarte), called *Ashtaroth* in 1 Chron. vi. 56, may possibly have been the capital of king Og (*Ashtaroth-karnaim*, Gen. xiv. 5), if not one of the two villages named *Astaroth*, which are mentioned by *Eusebius* in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Astharoth-karnaim*), and are described by Jerome as *duo castella in Batanæa, novem inter se millibus separata inter Adaram et Abilam civitates*, though Adara and Abila are too indefinite to determine the situation with any exactness. At any rate, the present *Busra* on the east of the Hauran cannot be thought of for a moment; for this was called *Βόσσορα* or *Βοσορρά*, *i.e.* בְּצֹרָה, in ancient times, as it is at the present day (see 1 Macc. v. 26, and *Joseph.* Ant. xii. 8, 3), and was corrupted into *Bostra* by the Greeks and Romans. Nor can it be the present *Kul'at Bustra* on the north of Banyas upon a shoulder of the Hermon, where there are the ruins of a magnificent building, probably a temple of ancient date (*Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 93, 94; *Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 414–15), as *Knobel* supposes, since the territory of the Israelites did not reach so far north,

the land conquered by Joshua merely extending to Baal-gad, *i.e.* Banyas, at the foot of the Hermon (see chap. xi. 17), and the land to the east of the Jordan, or Bashan, only to the Hermon itself, or more correctly, merely to the districts of Geshuri and Maacah at the south-eastern border of the Hermon (see at Deut. iii. 8, 14).—Vers. 28, 29. From Issachar they received four towns: *Kishon* (chap. xix. 20), *Dabrath* (chap. xix. 12), *Jarmuth* = *Remeth* (see chap. xix. 21), and *En-gannim* (chap. xix. 21, or *Anem*, 1 Chron. vi. 73).—Vers. 30, 31. From Asher they received four towns: *Mishal* or *Masal* (chap. xix. 26; cf. 1 Chron. vi. 74), *Abdon* (chap. xix. 28), *Helkath* (chap. xix. 25, called *Hukok* in 1 Chron. vi. 75, probably a copyist's error), and *Rehob* (chap. xix. 28).—Ver. 32. From Naphtali they received three towns: *Kedesh* (chap. xix. 37 and xii. 22), *Hammoth-dor* (called *Hammath* in chap. xix. 35, and *Hammon* in 1 Chron. vi. 76), and *Kartan* (contracted from *Kartain* for *Kirjathaim*, 1 Chron. vi. 76; like *Dothan* in 2 Kings vi. 13, from *Dothain* in Gen. xxxvii. 17). *Kartan* is not mentioned among the towns of Naphtali in chap. xix. 33 sqq.; according to *Knobel* it may possibly be *Katanah*, a place with ruins to the north-east of Safed (*Van de Velde*, Mem. p. 147).—Ver. 33. They received thirteen towns in all.—Vers. 34–40. The *Merarites* received twelve towns. From the tribe of Zebulun they received four: *Jokneam* (chap. xix. 11: see at chap. xii. 22), *Kartah* and *Dimnah*,[1] which are not mentioned among the towns of Zebulun in chap. xix. 11 sqq., and are unknown, and *Nahalal* (chap. xix. 15).—Vers. 36, 37. From Reuben they received four: *Bezer* (chap. xx. 8: see Deut. iv. 43), *Jahza*, *Kedemoth*, and *Mephaath* (chap. xiii. 18).[2]—Vers. 38, 39. From Gad they received four towns: *Ramoth* in Gilead, and *Mahanaim* (see at chap. xiii. 26), *Heshbon* (chap. xiii. 17) and *Jaezer* (chap. xiii. 25: see at Num. xxi. 32).—Ver. 40. They received

[1] Many commentators identify *Dimnah* with *Rimmono* in 1 Chron. vi. 77, but without sufficient reason; for the text of the Chronicles is no doubt corrupt in this passage, as it has only two names, *Rimmono* and *Tabor*, instead of four.

[2] *R. Jacob ben Chajim* has omitted vers. 36 and 37 from his Rabbinical Bible of the year 1525 as spurious, upon the authority of *Kimchi* and the larger Masora; but upon insufficient grounds, as these verses are to be found in many good MSS. and old editions of an earlier date than 1525, as well as in all the ancient versions, and could not possibly have been wanting from the very first, since the Merarites received twelve towns, which included the four that belonged to Reuben. In those MSS. in which they are wanting, the omission was, no doubt, a copyist's error, occasioned by the ὁμοιοτελευτόν (see *de Rossi variæ lectt. ad h. l.*, and *J. H. Michaelis'* Note to his Hebrew Bible).

twelve towns in all.—In vers. 41 and 42 the list of the Levitical towns is closed with a statement of their total number, and also with the repetition of the remark that "these cities were every one with their suburbs round about them." עִיר עִיר וּמִ׳, city city, *i.e.* every city, with its pasture round about it.

Vers. 43–45 form the conclusion to the account of the division of the land in chap. xiii.–xxi., which not only points back to chap. xi. 23, but also to chap. i. 2–6, and connects the two halves of our book together. By the division of Canaan among the tribes of Israel, the promise which Joshua had received from God after the death of Moses was fulfilled (chap. i. 2 sqq.). The Lord had given Israel the whole land which He had sworn to the fathers (Gen. xii. 7, xv. 18, compared with Josh. i. 3, 4); and they had now taken possession of it to dwell therein.—Ver. 44. He had also procured them rest round about, as He had sworn to their fathers, inasmuch as not a man of all their enemies stood against them. The expression "gave them rest," etc., points back to Deut. xii. 9, 10, and refers to all the divine promises of the Pentateuch which assured the Israelites of the peaceable possession of Canaan, such as Ex. xxxiii. 14, Deut. iii. 20, etc. No enemy had been able to withstand them, as the Lord had promised Joshua (chap. i. 5). "*The Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.*" It is true the Canaanites were not all exterminated; but those who were left had become so powerless, that they could neither accomplish nor attempt anything against Israel, so long as the Israelites adhered faithfully to their God, or so long as Joshua and the elders who were his contemporaries were alive (Judg. ii. 6 sqq.), because the Lord had overwhelmed them with fear and terror before the Israelites.[1]—Ver. 45. Of all the good words which the Lord had spoken to the house of Israel not one had fallen, *i.e.* remained unfulfilled (Num. vi. 12); all had come to pass (*vid.* chap. xxiii. 14). כָּל־הַדָּבָר הַטּוֹב relates to the gracious promises of God with regard to the peaceful possession of Canaan, which formed the basis of all the salvation promised to Israel, and the pledge of the fulfilment of all the further

[1] "If any one should raise a question as to their actual peace, the solution is easy enough. The tribes of Canaan were so alarmed and broken down with their fear, that in their opinion nothing could serve their purpose better than to purchase peace from the children of Israel by the most obsequious servility. Clearly, therefore, the land was subdued and their home at peace, since no one disturbed them, or attempted anything against them; there were no threats, no snares, no violence, and no conspiracy."—*Calvin.*

promises of God. Notwithstanding the fact that many a tract of country still remained in the hands of the Canaanites, the promise that the land of Canaan should be given to the house of Israel for a possession had been fulfilled; for God had not promised the immediate and total destruction of the Canaanites, but only their gradual extermination (Ex. xxiii. 29, 30; Deut. vii. 22). And even though the Israelites never came into undisputed possession of the whole of the promised land, to the full extent of the boundaries laid down in Num. xxxiv. 1-12, never conquering Tyre and Sidon for example, the promises of God were no more broken on that account than they were through the circumstance, that after the death of Joshua and the elders his contemporaries, Israel was sometimes hard pressed by the Canaanites; since the complete fulfilment of this promise was inseparably connected with the fidelity of Israel to the Lord.[1]

### RETURN OF THE TWO TRIBES AND A HALF TO THEIR OWN INHERITANCE.—CHAP. XXII.

Vers. 1-8. After the conquest and division of the land, Joshua sent the auxiliaries of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half Manasseh back to their homes, with a laudatory acknowledgment of the help they had given to their brethren, and a paternal admonition to adhere faithfully to the Lord and His law, and with a parting blessing (vers. 1-6). By the expression "*then Joshua called*," etc., the occurrence described in this chapter is placed in a general manner after the conquest and subjugation of Canaan, though not of necessity at the close of the distribution of the land. As the summons to these tribes to go with their brethren into Canaan, to assist them in the war, formed the commencement of Joshua's plans

[1] With reference to this apparent discrepancy between the promises of God and the actual results, *Calvin* observes, that "in order to remove every appearance of discrepancy, it is right to distinguish well between the clear, unwavering, and certain fidelity of God in the fulfilment of His promises, and the weakness and indolence of the people, which caused the blessings of God to slip from their hands. Whatever war the people undertook, in whatever direction they carried their standards, there was victory ready to their hand; nor was there anything to retard or prevent the extermination of all their enemies except their own slothfulness. Consequently, although they did not destroy them all, so as to empty the land for their own possession, the truth of God stood out as distinctly as if they had; for there would have been no difficulty in their accomplishment of all that remained to be done, if they had only been disposed to grasp the victories that were ready to their hand.'

for the conquest of Canaan (chap. i. 12 sqq.), their dismission to their home very properly forms the conclusion to the history of the conquest of this land by the Israelites. We might therefore assume, without in any way contradicting the words of the text, that these auxiliaries had been dismissed immediately after the war was ended. Even in that case, the account of their dismission would stand in its proper place, "since it was only right that the history itself, which relates to the conquest and possession of the land, should be fully completed before any other narratives, or any casual occurrences which took place, were introduced to break the thread" (*Lightfoot*, App. i. p. 42). On the other hand, however, the circumstance that the two tribes and a half were dismissed from Shiloh, where the tribes assembled for the first time during the casting of the lots, favours the conclusion that the dismission did not take place till after the lots had been cast; that is to say, contemporaneously with the advance of the other tribes into their possessions.—Vers. 2, 3. Joshua acknowledged that they had done all that they were under any obligation to do towards Moses and himself (Num. xxxii. 20 sqq.; Josh. i. 16, 17). "*Kept the charge of the commandment*," *i.e.* observed what had to be observed in relation to the commandment of the Lord (see at Lev. viii. 35 and Gen. xxvi. 5).—Ver. 4 points back to chap. i. 15. "*Unto your tents*," for to your homes,—an antiquated form of expression, as in Deut. xvi. 7, Judg. vii. 8, etc.—Ver. 5. Remembering, however, the changeableness of the human heart, Joshua appends to the acknowledgment of their fidelity in the performance of their duty the pressing admonition, to continue still to observe the law of Moses faithfully, to walk in the ways of the Lord and serve Him with the whole heart, which was simply a repetition of what Moses had impressed in a fatherly way upon the hearts of the people (see Deut. iv. 4, 29, vi. 5, x. 12, xi. 13, etc.).—Ver. 6. Thus Joshua dismissed them with blessings.—In ver. 7, the writer, for the sake of clearness, refers again to the fact that only half of Manasseh had received its inheritance from Moses in Bashan, whereas the other had received its inheritance through Joshua on the west of the Jordan (cf. chap. xiv. 3, and xviii. 7). To us such repetitions appear superfluous; but they are closely connected with the copious breadth of the early historical style of the Hebrews, which abounded in repetitions. The verb נָתַן (gave) wants its object, אֲחֻזָּתוֹ or נַחֲלָתוֹ, which may easily be supplied from the context. This interpolation involved a further repetition of the fact, that Joshua also dismissed

them (the Manassites of the other side) with a blessing, in order that the words might be appended with which Joshua dismissed the two tribes and a half to their homes, namely, the admonition to share the rich booty which they had accumulated with their brethren at home, in accordance with the instructions which Moses had given them with reference to the war with the Midianites (Num. xxxi. 25 sqq.).

Vers. 9–12. On the way home, when the two tribes and a half had reached the border of Canaan, they built a large conspicuous altar in the district of the Jordan, in the land of Canaan, *i.e.* on this side of the Jordan: "*a great altar to see to*," *i.e.* one which caught the eye on account of its size, since it was to serve for a memorial (vers. 24 sqq.). The definition appended to Shiloh, "*in the land of Canaan*" (ver. 9), serves to bring out the antithesis "*into the land of Gilead*," by which we are to understand the whole of the country to the east of the Jordan, as in Num. xxxii. 29, Deut. xxxiv. 1, Judg. v. 17, etc. נֵאחֵז, both in the form and meaning the same as in Num. xxxii. 30, *made possessors*, *i.e.* settled down. גְּלִילוֹת הַיַּרְדֵּן, *the circles of the Jordan*, is synonymous with כִּכַּר הַיַּרְדֵּן in Gen. xiii. 10, and signifies that portion of the Ghor which was upon the western side of the Jordan.—Vers. 11, 12. The Israelites (on this side) heard that the tribes in question had built the altar "*opposite to the land of Canaan*" (*lit.* in the face or in front of the land of Canaan), אֶל־עֵבֶר, "*at the opposite region of the children of Israel*" (two descriptions which may be explained on the supposition that the name of Canaan is used in a restricted sense, the valley of the Jordan being expressly excepted, and Canaan considered as only extending to the valley of the Jordan). When they heard this, the whole congregation (in its heads and representatives) assembled at Shiloh, to go up, *i.e.* with the intention of going, to make war against them. The congregation supposed that the altar had been built as a place for sacrifice, and therefore regarded it as a wicked violation of the commandment of God with regard to the unity of the sacrificial altar (Lev. xvii. 8, 9; Deut. xii. 4 sqq.), which they ought to punish according to the law in Deut. xiii. 13 sqq. This zeal was perfectly justifiable, and even praiseworthy, as the altar, even if not erected as a place for sacrifice, might easily be abused to that purpose, and thus become an occasion of sin to the whole nation. In any case, the two tribes and a half ought not to have erected such a building without the consent of Joshua or of the high priest.[1]

[1] "We know how sternly the law prohibited the use of two altars: because it was the will of God that His worship should be restricted to one place. When,

Vers. 13–20. The congregation therefore sent Phinehas, the son of the high priest and his presumptive successor in this office, with ten princes, one from each tribe (not the tribe-princes, but a head of the fathers' houses of the families of Israel), to Gilead, to the two tribes and a half, to call them to account for building the altar. —Ver. 16. Assuming at the outset that the altar was intended for a second place of sacrifice in opposition to the command of God, the delegates, with Phinehas no doubt as their speaker, began by reproaching them for falling away from the Lord. "*What faithlessness is this* (מַעַל: see at Lev. v. 15) *that ye have committed against the God of Israel, to turn away this day from Jehovah, in that ye have builded you an altar, that ye might rebel this day against Jehovah?*" מָרַד (to rebel) is stronger than מָעַל.—Vers. 17 sqq. To show the greatness of the sin through apostasy from the Lord, the speaker reminds them of two previous acts of sin on the part of the nation, which had brought severe judgments upon the congregation. "*Is there too little for us in the iniquity of Peor* (*i.e.* with Peor, or through the worship of Peor, Num. xxv. 3), *from which we have not cleansed ourselves till this day, and there came the plague upon the congregation of Jehovah?*" אֶת־עָוֹן is an accusative: see *Ges.* § 117, 2; *Ewald*, § 277, *d.* That plague, of which 24,000 Israelites died, was stayed through the zeal of Phinehas for the honour of the Lord (Num. xxv. 4–9, 11). The guilt connected with the worship of Peor had thereby been avenged upon the congregation, and the congregation itself had been saved from any further punishment in consequence of the sin. When Phinehas, therefore, affirmed that the congregation had not yet been cleansed from the crime, he did not mean that they were still bearing or suffering from the punishment of that crime, but that they were not yet cleansed from that sin, inasmuch as many of them were still attached to idolatry in their hearts, even if they had hitherto desisted from it outwardly from fear of the infliction of fresh judgments.—Ver. 18. "*And*

therefore, from the very appearance it could not fail to occur to the mind of any one that they were establishing a second altar, who would not have condemned them as guilty of sacrilege, for introducing rites and ceremonies at variance with the law of God? And since it might so naturally be regarded as a wicked deed, they ought certainly to have consulted their brethren in so grave and important a matter; and it was especially wrong to pass by the high priest, when the will of God might have been learned from his lips. They were deserving of blame, therefore, because they acted as if they had been alone in the world, and did not consider what offence might easily arise from the novelty of their proceedings."—*Calvin.*

*to-day ye turn away from the Lord again*," and are about to bring His wrath upon the whole congregation again through a fresh rebellion.—Ver. 19. "*And truly*," the speaker continued, "*if the land of your possession should be unclean*," *sc.* so that you think it necessary to have an altar in the neighbourhood to expiate your sins and wipe away your uncleannesses, "*pass over into the land of Jehovah's possession, where His dwelling-place stands, and settle in the midst of us* ('settle,' as in Gen. xxxiv. 10); *but do not rebel against Jehovah nor against us, by building an altar beside the* (one) *altar of Jehovah our God.*" מָרַד is construed first of all with בְּ, and then with the accusative; the only other place in which the latter occurs is Job xxiv. 13.—Ver. 20. He finally reminded them of the sin of Achan, how that had brought the wrath of God upon the whole congregation (chap. vii.); and, moreover, Achan was not the only man who had perished on account of the sin, but thirty-six men had fallen on account of it at the first attack upon Ai (chap. vii. 5). The allusion to this fact is to be understood as an argument *a minori ad majus*, as *Masius* has shown. "If Achan did not perish alone when he committed sacrilege, but God was angry with the whole congregation, what think ye will be the consequence if ye, so great a number, commit so grievous a sin against God?"

Vers. 21–29. In utter amazement at the suspicion expressed by the delegates of the congregation, the two tribes and a half affirm with a solemn oath, that it never entered into their minds to build an altar as a place of sacrifice, to fall away from Jehovah. The combination of the three names of God—EL, the strong one; ELOHIM, the Supreme Being to be feared; and JEHOVAH, the truly existing One, the covenant God (ver. 22)—serves to strengthen the invocation of God, as in Ps. l. 1; and this is strengthened still further by the repetition of these three names. God knows, and let Israel also know, *sc.* what they intended, and what they have done. The אִם which follows is the usual particle used in an oath. "*Verily* (it was) *not in rebellion, nor in apostasy from Jehovah*," *sc.* that this was done, or that we built the altar. "*Mayst Thou not help us to-day*," *sc.* if we did it in rebellion against God. An appeal addressed immediately to God in the heat of the statement, and introduced in the midst of the asseveration, which was meant to remove all doubt as to the truth of their declaration. The words which follow in ver. 23, "*that we have built*," etc., continue the oath: *If we have done this, to build us an altar, to turn away from*

*the Lord, or to offer thereon burnt-offering, meat-offering, or peace-offering, may Jehovah himself require it* (יְדָרֵשׁ, as in Deut. xviii. 19; cf. 1 Sam. xx. 16). Another earnest parenthetical adjuration, as the substance of the oath, is continued in ver. 24. "*But truly* (וְאִם לֹא, with an affirmative signification) *from anxiety, for a reason* (*lit.* on account of a thing) *have we done this, thinking* (לֵאמֹר, since we thought) *in time to come your sons might say to our sons, What have ye to do with Jehovah, the God of Israel?*" *i.e.* He does not concern you; He is our God. "*Jehovah has made the Jordan a boundary between us and your sons; ye have no part in Jehovah. Thus your sons might make our sons cease to fear Jehovah,*" *i.e.* might make them desist from the worship of Jehovah (for the infinitive form יְרֹא instead of the abbreviated form לְרֹא used in 1 Sam. xviii. 29, there are analogies in יְצֹק in Ezek. xxiv. 3, and לְיַשֵּׁן, Eccl. v. 11, whereas יְרֹאָה is the only form used in the Pentateuch). There was some reason for this anxiety. For, inasmuch as in all the promises and laws Canaan alone (the land on this side of the Jordan, Num. xxxiv. 1–12) is always mentioned as the land which Jehovah would give to His people for their inheritance, it was quite a possible thing that at some future time the false conclusion might be drawn from this, that only the tribes who dwelt in Canaan proper were the true people of Jehovah.—Vers. 26 sqq. "*So we thought, we will make ourselves to build an altar* (an expression derived from the language of ordinary life, for 'we will build ourselves an altar'), *not for burnt-offerings and slain-offerings; but it shall be a witness between us and you, and between our generations after us, that we may perform the service of Jehovah before His face* (*i.e.* before the tabernacle in which Jehovah was enthroned), *with our burnt-offerings, slain-offerings, and peace-offerings,*"—in order, as they repeat in ver. 27*b* from vers. 24, 25, that they might not be denied a part in Jehovah in time to come. For if it should so happen in time to come, that this should be said to them and to their descendants, they would say (or reply), "*Behold the copy of the altar of Jehovah, which our fathers made, not for burnt-offerings,*" etc. (ver. 28*b*, as in vers. 26*b*, 27*a*). For this reason they had built the altar according to the pattern of the altar before the tabernacle, and that not in their own land, but on the western side of the Jordan, where the dwelling-place of Jehovah was standing, as a witness that they worshipped one and the same God with the tribes on this side.—Ver. 29. The speakers conclude with an expression of horror at the thought of rebelling against Jehovah. חָלִילָה לָּנוּ מִמֶּנּוּ, "*far be it*

*from us away from Him* (מֵאַחֲרֵי = מֵיְהוָה, 1 Sam. xxiv. 7, xxvi. 11; 1 Kings xxi. 3), *to rebel against Jehovah,*" etc.

Vers. 30–34. This explanation pleased the delegates of the congregation, so that Phinehas bore this testimony to the tribes on the east of the Jordan: "*Now* (to-day) *we perceive that Jehovah is in the midst of us; because* (אֲשֶׁר, *quod,* as in Gen. xxxi. 49, etc.) *ye have not committed this unfaithfulness towards Jehovah, since* (אָז, then, if ye had only this intention) *ye have saved the children of Israel out of the hand of Jehovah,*" *i.e.* preserved them from His judgments.—Vers. 32, 33. They then returned to Canaan and informed the congregation. And the thing pleased them, so that they praised the Lord, *sc.* for having kept their brethren on the other side from rebellion, and they thought no more of going to war against them, or laying waste the land of the tribes on the east of the Jordan.—Ver. 34. The Reubenites and Gadites (half Manasseh is omitted in vers. 33, 34, for the sake of brevity) called the altar "*witness is it between us that Jehovah is God*" (כִּי introduces the words). This is at once a name and an explanation, namely in this sense: they gave the altar the name of "*witness between us,*" because it was to be a witness that they also acknowledged and worshipped Jehovah as the true God.

## JOSHUA'S FAREWELL AND DEATH.—CHAP. XXIII. XXIV.

After the division of the land among the tribes, Joshua had withdrawn to *Timnath-serah,* on the mountains of Ephraim (chap. xix. 50), to spend the last days of his life there in the quiet enjoyment of his own inheritance. But when the time of his departure from the earth was drawing near, remembering the call which he had received from the Lord (chap. i. 6–8), he felt constrained to gather the people together once more in the persons of their representatives, to warn them most earnestly of the dangers of apostasy from the Lord, and point out the evils that would follow (chap. xxiii.); and then after that, in a solemn assembly of the nation at Shechem, to review the abundant mercies which the Lord had conferred upon Israel from the calling of Abraham to that day, that he might call upon them to remain stedfast and faithful in the worship of their God, and then solemnly renew the covenant with the Lord.[1]

[1] "The pious solicitude of Joshua furnishes an example worthy of imitation by all who have the charge of others. For just as a father would not be

Chap. xxiii. EXHORTATION TO THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL TO REMAIN FAITHFUL TO THEIR CALLING.—Vers. 1, 2. The introduction to the discourse which follows is attached in its first part to chap. xxii. 3, 4, and thus also to chap. xxi. 43, 44, whilst in the second part it points back to chap. xiii. 1. The Lord had given the people rest from all their enemies round about, after the land had been subdued and divided by lot (chap. xxi. 43, 44). Joshua was already an old man at the termination of the war (chap. xiii. 1); but since then he had advanced still further in age, so that he may have noticed the signs of the near approach of death. He therefore called together the representatives of the people, either to Timnath-serah where he dwelt (chap. xix. 50), or to Shiloh to the tabernacle, the central sanctuary of the whole nation, as the most suitable place for his purpose. "*All Israel*" is still further defined by the apposition, "*its elders, and its heads, and its judges, and its officers.*" This is not to be understood, however, as referring to four different classes of rulers; but the term *elders* is the general term used to denote all the representatives of the people, who were divided into heads, judges, and officers. And the *heads*, again, were those who stood at the head of the tribes, families, and fathers' houses, and out of whose number the most suitable persons were chosen as judges and officers (Deut. i. 15; see my Bibl. Arch. ii. § 143). Joshua's address to the elders of all Israel consists of two parts, which run parallel to one another so far as the contents are concerned, vers. 2*b*–13 and vers. 14–16. In both parts Joshua commences with a reference to his age and his approaching death, in consequence of which he felt constrained to remind the people once more of all the great things that the Lord had done for them, and to warn them against falling away from their gracious covenant God. Just as Joshua, in this the last act of his life, was merely treading in the footsteps of Moses, who had concluded his life with the fullest exhortations to the people to be faithful to the Lord (Deut. i. 30), so his address consists entirely of reminiscences from the Pentateuch, more especially from Deuteronomy, as he had

regarded as sufficiently careful if he merely thought of the interests of his children up to the time of his own death, and did not extend his thoughtfulness on their behalf still further, and as far as was in his power endeavour to provide for their welfare when he himself should be dead; so good rulers ought to look forward that they may not only leave behind them a well-organized state, but may also strengthen and secure its existence for a long time to come." —*Calvin* (with special reference to 2 Pet. i. 13–15).

nothing fresh to announce to the people, but could only impress the old truth upon their minds once more.

Vers. 2*b*–13. Joshua commenced his address by reminding them of the greatest manifestations of grace which they had received from the Lord, namely, by referring to what the Lord had done to all these nations (the Canaanites) before them, when He fought for Israel, as Moses had promised them (Deut. i. 30 and iii. 22).—Ver. 3. "*Before you*," *sc.* smiting and driving them away. —Ver. 4. He (Joshua) had now divided by lot among the tribes of Israel as their inheritance these still remaining (Canaanitish) nations, as the Lord had commanded (chap. xiii. 6, 7), "*from Jordan and further all the nations, which I have exterminated* (*i.e.* which Joshua had destroyed when Canaan was taken), *and the great sea* (for 'to the great sea') *in the west*." The breadth of the land of Canaan is here given in a peculiar manner, the *terminus a quo* being mentioned in the first clause, and the *terminus ad quem* (though without the preposition עַד) in the second; and through the parallelism which exists between the clauses, each clause is left to be completed from the other. So that the whole sentence would read thus: "*All these nations which remain . . . from Jordan to the great sea, also all the nations which I have cut off from Jordan, and to the great sea westward*."—Ver. 5. For the Lord would drive all these still remaining nations before the Israelites, and cut them off, and give the Israelites their land for a possession, as He had promised (chap. xiii. 6; cf. Ex. xxiii. 23 sqq.). הָרַף, as in Deut. vi. 19, ix. 4; and the form יְהֹדָפֵם, with *Chateph-kametz*, on account of the weakness of the ה, as in Num. xxxv. 20. יְרִשְׁתֶּם, as in chap. i. 15.—Vers. 6 sqq. Only let them be strong, *i.e.* be brave, to keep the law of Moses without fail (cf. chap. i. 7), to enter into no fellowship with these remaining nations (בּוֹא, to enter into close intimacy with a person; see ver. 12), and not to pay reverence to their gods in any way, but to adhere stedfastly to the Lord their God as they had hitherto done. To make mention of the names of the idols (Ex. xxiii. 13), to swear by them, to serve them (by sacrifices), and to bow down to them (to invoke them in prayer), are the four outward forms of divine worship (see Deut. vi. 13, x. 20). The concluding words, "*as ye have done unto this day*," which express a reason for persevering in the attachment they had hitherto shown to Jehovah, "do not affirm that the Israelites had hitherto done all these things fully and perfectly; for who does not know how few mortals there are who devote themselves to God

with all the piety and love which He justly demands? But because the nation as a whole had kept the laws delivered to them by Moses, during the time that the government had been in the hands of Joshua, the sins of individual men were left out of sight on this occasion" (*Masius*).—Vers. 9, 10. For this reason the Lord had driven out great and strong nations before the Israelites, so that no one was able to stand before them. The first hemistich points to the fulfilment of Deut. iv. 38, vii. 1, ix. 1, xi. 23; the second to that of Deut. vii. 24, xi. 25. וְאַתֶּם is placed at the beginning absolutely.—In ver. 10*a*, the blessing of fidelity to the law which Israel had hitherto experienced, is described, as in Deut. xxxii. 30, upon the basis of the promise in Lev. xxvi. 7, 8, and Deut. xxviii. 7, and in ver. 10*b* the thought of ver. 3*b* is repeated. To this there is attached, in vers. 11–13, the admonition to take heed for the sake of their souls (cf. Deut. iv. 15), to love the Lord their God (on the love of God as the sum of the fulfilment of the law, see Deut. vi. 5, x. 12, xi. 13). For if they turned, *i.e.* gave up the faithfulness they had hitherto displayed towards Jehovah, and attached themselves to the remnant of these nations, made marriages with them, and entered into fellowship with them, which the Lord had expressly forbidden (Ex. xxxiv. 12–16; Deut. vii. 3), let them know that the Lord their God would not cut off these nations before them any more, but that they would be a snare and destruction to them. This threat is founded upon such passages of the law as Ex. xxiii. 33, Deut. vii. 16, and more especially Num. xxxiii. 55. The figure of a trap, which is employed here (see Ex. x. 7), is still further strengthened by פַּח, *a snare* (cf. Isa. viii. 14, 15). *Shotet*, a *whip or scourge*, an emphatic form of the word derived from the *poel* of שׁוּט, only occurs here. "*Scourges in your sides, and thorns in your eyes*" (see Num. xxxiii. 55). Joshua crowds his figures together to depict the misery and oppression which would be sure to result from fellowship with the Canaanites, because, from his knowledge of the fickleness of the people, and the wickedness of the human heart in its natural state, he could foresee that the apostasy of the nation from the Lord, which Moses had foretold, would take place but too quickly; as it actually did, according to Judg. ii. 3 sqq., in the very next generation. The words "*until ye perish*," etc., resume the threat held out by Moses in Deut. xi. 17 (cf. chap. xxviii. 21 sqq.).

Vers. 14–16. In the second part of his address, Joshua sums up briefly and concisely the leading thoughts of the first part,

giving greater prominence, however, to the curse which would follow apostasy from the Lord.—Ver. 14. Now that Joshua was going the way of all the earth (all the inhabitants of the earth), *i.e.* going to die (1 Kings ii. 2), the Israelites knew with all the heart and all the soul, *i.e.* were fully convinced, that of all the good words (gracious promises) of God not one had failed, but all had come to pass (*vid.* chap. xxi. 45). But it was just as certain that the Lord would bring upon them every evil word that He spake through Moses (Lev. xxvi. 14–33; Deut. xxviii. 15–68, and xxix. 14–28), if they transgressed His covenant. "*The evil word*" is the curse of rejection (Deut. xxx. 1, 15). "*Until He have destroyed:*" see Deut. vii. 24, and xxviii. 48. The other words as in ver. 13*b*. If they went after other gods and served them, the wrath of the Lord would burn against them, and they would be quickly destroyed from the good land which He had given them (*vid.* Deut. xi. 17).

Chap. xxiv. 1-28. RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT AT THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY IN SHECHEM.—Ver. 1. Joshua brought his public ministry to a close, as Moses had done before him, with a solemn renewal of the covenant with the Lord. For this solemn act he did not choose Shiloh, the site of the national sanctuary, as some MSS. of the LXX. read, but Shechem, a place which was sanctified as no other was for such a purpose as this by the most sacred reminiscences from the times of the patriarchs. He therefore summoned all the tribes of Israel, in their representatives (their elders, etc., as in chap. xxiii. 2), to Shechem, not merely because it was at Shechem, *i.e.* on Gerizim and Ebal, that the solemn establishment of the law in the land of Canaan, to which the renewal of the covenant, as a repetition of the essential kernel of that solemn ceremony, was now to be appended, had first taken place, but still more because it was here that Abraham received the first promise from God after his migration into Canaan, and built an altar at the time (Gen. xii. 6, 7); and most of all, as *Hengstenberg* has pointed out (Diss. ii. p. 12), because Jacob settled here on his return from Mesopotamia, and it was here that he purified his house from the strange gods, burying all their idols under the oak (Gen. xxxiii. 19, xxxv. 2, 4). As Jacob selected Shechem for the sanctification of his house, because this place was already consecrated by Abraham as a sanctuary of God, so Joshua chose the same place for the renewal of the covenant, because this act involved a practical

renunciation on the part of Israel of all idolatry. Joshua expressly states this in ver. 23, and reference is also made to it in the account in ver. 26. "The exhortation to be faithful to the Lord, and to purify themselves from all idolatry, could not fail to make a deep impression, in the place where the honoured patriarch had done the very same things to which his descendants were exhorted here. The example preached more loudly in this spot than in any other" (*Hengstenberg*). "*And they placed themselves before God.*" From the expression "before God," it by no means follows that the ark had been brought to Shechem, or, as *Knobel* supposes, that an altar was erected there, any more than from the statement in ver. 26 that it was "*by the sanctuary of the Lord.*" For, in the first place, "before God" (*Elohim*) is not to be identified with "before Jehovah," which is used in chap. xviii. 6 and xix. 51 to denote the presence of the Lord above the ark of the covenant; and secondly, even "before Jehovah" does not always presuppose the presence of the ark of the covenant, as *Hengstenberg* has clearly shown. "Before God" simply denotes in a general sense the religious character of an act, or shows that the act was undertaken with a distinct reference to the omnipresent God; and in the case before us it may be attributed to the fact that Joshua delivered his exhortation to the people in the name of Jehovah, and commenced his address with the words, "Thus saith Jehovah."[1]

Vers. 2–15. Joshua's address contains an expansion of two thoughts. He first of all recalls to the recollection of the whole nation, whom he is addressing in the persons of its representatives, all the proofs of His mercy which the Lord had given, from the calling of Abraham to that day (vers. 2–13); and then because of these divine acts he calls upon the people to renounce all idolatry, and to serve God the Lord alone (vers. 14, 15). Jehovah is described as the "God of Israel" both at the commencement (ver. 2) and also at the close of the whole transaction, in perfect accordance with the substance and object of the address, which is occupied throughout with the goodness conferred by God upon the race of

[1] "It is stated that they all stood before God, in order that the sanctity and religious character of the assembly may be the more distinctly shown. And there can be no doubt that the name of God was solemnly invoked by Joshua, and that he addressed the people as in the sight of God, so that each one might feel for himself that God was presiding over all that was transacted there, and that they were not engaged in any merely private affair, but were entering into a sacred and inviolable compact with God himself."—*Calvin.*

*Israel.* The first practical proof of the grace of God towards Israel, was the calling of Abraham from his idolatrous associations, and his introduction to the land of Canaan, where the Lord so multiplied his seed, that Esau received the mountains of Seir for his family, whilst Jacob went into Egypt with his sons.[1] The ancestors of Israel dwelt "*from eternity*," *i.e.* from time immemorial, on the other side of the stream (the Euphrates), viz. in Ur of the Chaldees, and then at Haran in Mesopotamia (Gen. xi. 28, 31), namely Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor. Of Terah's three sons (Gen. xi. 27), Nahor is mentioned as well as Abraham, because Rebekah, and her nieces Leah and Rachel, the tribe-mothers of Israel, were descended from him (Gen. xxii. 23, xxix. 10, 16 sqq.). And they (your fathers, Terah and his family) served other gods than Jehovah, who revealed himself to Abraham, and brought him from his father's house to Canaan. Nothing definite can be gathered from the expression "other gods," with reference to the gods worshipped by Terah and his family; nor is there anything further to be found respecting them throughout the whole of the Old Testament. We simply learn from Gen. xxxi. 19, 34, that Laban had *teraphim, i.e. penates,* or household and oracular gods.[2] The question also, whether Abraham was an idolater before his call, which has been answered in different ways, cannot be determined with certainty. We may conjecture, however, that he was not deeply sunk in idolatry, though he had not remained entirely free from it in his father's house; and therefore that his call is not to be regarded as a reward for his righteousness before God, but as an act of free unmerited grace.—Vers. 3, 4. After his

[1] "He commences with their gratuitous training, by which God had precluded them from the possibility of boasting of any pre-eminence or merit. For God had bound them to himself by a closer bond, because when they were on an equality with others, He drew them to himself to be His own peculiar people, for no other reason than His own good pleasure. Moreover, in order that it may be clearly seen that they have nothing whereof to glory, he leads them back to their earliest origin, and relates how their fathers had dwelt in Chaldæa, worshipping idols in common with the rest, and with nothing to distinguish them from the crowd."—*Calvin.*

[2] According to one tradition, Abraham was brought up in Sabæism in his father's house (see *Hottinger*, Histor. Orient. p. 246, and *Philo*, in several passages of his works); and according to another, in the *Targum Jonathan* on Gen. xi. 23, and in the later Rabbins, Abraham had to suffer persecution on account of his dislike to idolatry, and was obliged to leave his native land in consequence. But these traditions are both of them nothing more than conjectures by the later Rabbins.

call, God conducted Abraham through all the land of Canaan (see Gen. xii.), protecting and shielding him, and multiplied his seed, giving him Isaac, and giving to Isaac Jacob and Esau, the ancestors of two nations. To the latter He gave the mountains of Seir for a possession (Gen. xxxvi. 6 sqq.), that Jacob might receive Canaan for his descendants as a sole possession. But instead of mentioning this, Joshua took for granted that his hearers were well acquainted with the history of the patriarchs, and satisfied himself with mentioning the migration of Jacob and his sons to Egypt, that he might pass at once to the second great practical proof of the mercy of God in the guidance of Israel, the miraculous deliverance of Israel out of the bondage and oppression of Egypt.—Vers. 5–7. Of this also he merely mentions the leading points, viz. first of all, the sending of Moses and Aaron (Ex. iii. 10 sqq., iv. 14 sqq.), and then the plagues inflicted upon Egypt. "*I smote Egypt*," *i.e.* both land and people. נגף is used in Ex. vii. 27 and xii. 23, 27, in connection with the plague of frogs and the slaying of the first-born in Egypt. The words which follow, "*according to that which I did among them, and afterward I brought you out*," point back to Ex. iii. 20, and show that the Lord had fulfilled the promise given to Moses at his call. He then refers (vers. 6, 7) to the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites, as they came out of Egypt, from Pharaoh who pursued them with his army, giving especial prominence to the crying of the Israelites to the Lord in their distress (Ex. xiv. 10), and the relief of that distress by the angel of the Lord (Ex. xiv. 19, 20). And lastly, he notices their dwelling in the wilderness "*many days*," *i.e.* forty years (Num. xiv. 33).—Vers. 8–10. The third great act of God for Israel was his giving up the Amorites into the hands of the Israelites, so that they were able to conquer their land (Num. xxi. 21–35), and the frustration of the attack made by Balak king of the Moabites, through the instrumentality of Balaam, when the Lord did not allow him to curse Israel, but compelled him to bless (Num. xxii.-xxiv.). Balak "*warred against Israel*," not with the sword, but with the weapons of the curse, or *animo et voluntate* (*Vatabl.*). "*I would not hearken unto Balaam*," *i.e.* would not comply with his wish, but compelled him to submit to my will, and to bless you; "*and delivered you out of his* (Balak's) *hand*," when he sought to destroy Israel through the medium of Balaam (Num. xxii. 6, 11).—Vers. 11–13. The last and greatest benefit which the Lord conferred upon the Israelites, was His leading them by miracles of His omnipotence across the Jordan

into Canaan, delivering the "*lords* (or possessors) *of Jericho*," not "the rulers, *i.e.* the king and his heroes," as *Knobel* maintains (see 2 Sam. xxi. 12; 1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12; and the commentary on Judg. ix. 6), "*and all the tribes of Canaan into their hand*," and sending *hornets before them*, so that they were able to drive out the Canaanites, particularly the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, though "*not with their sword and their bow*" (*vid.* Ps. xliv. 4); *i.e.* it was not with the weapons at their command that they were able to take the lands of these two kings. On the sending of hornets, as a figure used to represent peculiarly effective terrors, see at Ex. xxiii. 28, Deut. vii. 20. In this way the Lord gave the land to the Israelites, with its towns and its rich productions (vineyards and olive trees), without any trouble on their part of wearisome cultivation or planting, as Moses himself had promised them (Deut. vi. 10, 11).—Vers. 14, 15. These overwhelming manifestations of grace on the part of the Lord laid Israel under obligations to serve the Lord with gratitude and sincerity. "*Now therefore fear the Lord* (יִרְאוּ for יִרְאֻ, pointed like a verb ל״ה, as in 1 Sam. xii. 24, Ps. xxxiv. 10), *and serve Him in sincerity and in truth*," *i.e.* without hypocrisy, or the show of piety, in simplicity and truth of heart (*vid.* Judg. ix. 16, 19). "*Put away the gods* (*Elohim* = the strange gods in ver. 23) *which your fathers served on the other side of the Euphrates and in Egypt.*" This appeal does not presuppose any gross idolatry on the part of the existing generation, which would have been at variance with the rest of the book, in which Israel is represented as only serving Jehovah during the lifetime of Joshua. If the people had been in possession of idols, they would have given them up to Joshua to be destroyed, as they promised to comply with his demand (vers. 16 sqq.). But even if the Israelites were not addicted to gross idolatry in the worship of idols, they were not altogether free from idolatry either in Egypt or in the desert. As their fathers were possessed of *teraphim* in Mesopotamia (see at ver. 2), so the Israelites had not kept themselves entirely free from heathen and idolatrous ways, more especially the demon-worship of Egypt (comp. Lev. xvii. 7 with Ezek. xx. 7 sqq., xxiii. 3, 8, and Amos v. 26); and even in the time of Joshua their worship of Jehovah may have been corrupted by idolatrous elements. This admixture of the pure and genuine worship of Jehovah with idolatrous or heathen elements, which is condemned in Lev. xvii. 7 as the worship of *Seirim*, and by Ezekiel (*l. c.*) as the idolatrous worship of the people in Egypt, had its roots in the corruption of the

natural heart, through which it is at all times led to make to itself idols of mammon, worldly lusts, and other impure thoughts and desires, to which it cleaves, without being able to tear itself entirely away from them. This more refined idolatry might degenerate in the case of many persons into the grosser worship of idols, so that Joshua had ample ground for admonishing the people to put away the strange gods, and serve the Lord.—Ver. 15. But as the true worship of the living God must have its roots in the heart, and spring from the heart, and therefore cannot be forced by prohibitions and commands, Joshua concluded by calling upon the representatives of the nation, in case they were not inclined ("if it seem evil unto you") to serve Jehovah, to choose now this day the gods whom they would serve, whether the gods of their fathers in Mesopotamia, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land they were now dwelling, though he and his house would serve the Lord. There is no necessity to adduce any special proofs that this appeal was not intended to release them from the obligation to serve Jehovah, but rather contained the strongest admonition to remain faithful to the Lord.

Vers. 16–25. The people responded to this appeal by declaring, with an expression of horror at idolatry, their hearty resolution to serve the Lord, who was their God, and had shown them such great mercies. The words, "*that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage,*" call to mind the words appended to the first commandment (Ex. xx. 2; Deut. v. 6), which they hereby promise to observe. With the clause which follows, "*who did those great signs in our sight,*" etc., they declare their assent to all that Joshua had called to their mind in vers. 3–13. "*We also*" (ver. 18), as well as thou and thy house (ver. 15).—Vers. 19–21. But in order to place most vividly before the minds of the people to what it was that they bound themselves by this declaration, that they might not inconsiderately vow what they would not afterwards observe, Joshua adds, "*Ye cannot serve Jehovah,*" *sc.* in the state of mind in which ye are at present, or "by your own resolution only, and without the assistance of divine grace, without solid and serious conversion from all idols, and without true repentance and faith" (*J. H. Michaelis*). For Jehovah is "*a holy God,*" etc. *Elohim*, used to denote the Supreme Being (see at Gen. ii. 4), is construed with the predicate in the plural. On the holiness of God, see the exposition of Ex. xix. 6. On the expression "*a jealous God,*" see Ex. xx. 5; and on נִשָּׂא לְמַשֵּׂא, Ex. xxiii. 21. The

only other place in which the form קִנֹּא is used for קַנָּא is Nah. i. 2. "*If ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, He will turn* (*i.e.* assume a different attitude towards you) *and do you hurt, after He has done you good*," *i.e.* He will not spare you, in spite of the blessings which He has conferred upon you. הֵרַע is used to denote the judgments threatened in the law against transgressors.—Ver. 21. The people adhered to their resolution. לֹא, *minime*, as in chap. v. 14, *i.e.* we will not serve other gods, but Jehovah.—Vers. 22, 23. Upon this repeated declaration Joshua says to them, "*ye are witnesses against yourselves*," *i.e.* ye will condemn yourselves by this your own testimony if ye should now forsake the Lord, "for ye yourselves have chosen you Jehovah to serve Him;" whereupon they answer עֵדִים, "*witnesses are we against ourselves*," signifying thereby, "we profess and ratify once more all that we have said" (*Rosenmüller*). Joshua then repeated his demand that they should put away the strange gods from within them, and incline their hearts (entirely) to Jehovah the God of Israel. אֱלֹהֵי הַנֵּכָר אֲשֶׁר בְּקִרְבְּכֶם might mean the foreign gods which are in the midst of you, *i.e.* among you, and imply the existence of idols, and the grosser forms of idolatrous worship in the nation; but בְּקֶרֶב also signifies "within," or "in the heart," in which case the words refer to idols of the heart. That the latter is the sense in which the words are to be understood is evident from the fact, that although the people expressed their willingness to renounce all idolatry, they did not bring any idols to Joshua to be destroyed, as was done in other similar cases, viz. Gen. xxxv. 4, and 1 Sam. vii. 4. Even if the people had carried idols about with them in the desert, as the prophet Amos stated to his contemporaries (Amos v. 26; cf. Acts vii. 43), the grosser forms of idolatry had disappeared from Israel with the dying out of the generation that was condemned at Kadesh. The new generation, which had been received afresh into covenant with the Lord by the circumcision at Gilgal, and had set up this covenant at Ebal, and was now assembled around Joshua, the dying servant of God, to renew the covenant once more, had no idols of wood, stone, or metal, but only the "figments of false gods," as *Calvin* calls them, the idols of the heart, which it was to put away, that it might give its heart entirely to the Lord, who is not content with divided affections, but requires the whole heart (Deut. vi. 5, 6). —Vers. 24, 25. On the repeated and decided declaration of the people, "*the Lord our God will we serve, and to His voice will we hearken*," Joshua completed the covenant with them that day. This

conclusion of a covenant was really a solemn renewal of the covenant made at Sinai, like that which took place under Moses in the steppes of Moab (Deut. xxviii. 69). "*And set them a statute and right at Shechem*," *sc.* through the renewal of the covenant. These words recall Ex. xv. 25, where the guidance of Israel to bitter water, and the sweetening of that water by the means which the Lord pointed out to Moses, are described as setting a *statute and right* for Israel, and then explained by the promise, that if they would hearken to the voice of Jehovah, He would keep them from all the diseases of Egypt. And in accordance with this, by the renewal of the covenant at Shechem, there were set for Israel a חֹק, *i.e.* a *statute*, which bound the people to a renewed and conscientious maintenance of the covenant, and a מִשְׁפָּט, or *right*, by virtue of which they might expect on this condition the fulfilment of all the covenant mercies of the Lord.

Vers. 26–28. All these things (הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה are not merely the words spoken on both sides, but the whole ceremony of renewing the covenant) Joshua wrote in the law-book of God, *i.e.* he wrote them in a document which he placed in the law-book of Moses, and then set up a large stone, as a permanent memorial of what had taken place, on the spot where the meeting had been held, "*under the oak that was in the sanctuary of Jehovah*." As בְּמִקְדָּשׁ neither means "at the sanctuary," nor near the sanctuary, nor "in the place where the sanctuary was set up;" the "sanctuary of Jehovah" cannot signify "the ark of the covenant, which had been brought from the tabernacle to Shechem, for the ceremony of renewing the covenant." Still less can we understand it as signifying the tabernacle itself, since this was not removed from place to place for particular sacred ceremonies; nor can it mean an altar, in which an oak could not possibly be said to stand; nor some other illegal sanctuary of Jehovah, since there were none in Israel at that time. The sanctuary of Jehovah under the oak at Shechem was nothing else than the holy place under the oak, where Abraham had formerly built an altar and worshipped the Lord, and where Jacob had purified his house from the strange gods, which he buried under this oak, or rather terebinth tree (Gen. xii. 6, 7, xxxv. 2, 4). This is the explanation adopted by *Masius*, *J. D. Michaelis*, and *Hengstenberg* (Diss. ii. p. 12). In ver. 27 Joshua explains to the people the meaning of the stone which he had set up. The stone would be a witness against the people if they should deny their God. As a memorial of what had taken place, the stone had heard all the words

which the Lord had addressed to Israel, and could bear witness against the people, that they might not deny their God. "*Deny your God*," viz. in feeling, word, or deed.—Ver. 28. Joshua then dismissed the people, each one to his inheritance. He had done all that was in his power to establish the people in fidelity to the Lord.

Vers. 29–33. DEATH AND BURIAL OF JOSHUA AND ELEAZAR. —With the renewal of the covenant Joshua had ended his vocation. He did not formally lay down his office, because there was no immediate successor who had been appointed by God. The ordinary rulers of the congregation were enough, when once they were settled in Canaan, viz. the elders as heads and judges of the nation, together with the high priest, who represented the nation in its relation to God, and could obtain for it the revelation of the will of God through the right of the Urim and Thummim. In order therefore to bring the history of Joshua and his times to a close, nothing further remained than to give an account of his death, with a short reference to the fruit of his labours, and to add certain other notices for which no suitable place had hitherto presented itself.—Vers. 29, 30. Soon after these events (vers. 1–28) Joshua died, at the age of 110, like his ancestor Joseph (Gen. l. 26), and was buried in his hereditary possessions at Timnath-serah, upon the mountains of Ephraim, to the north of Mount Gaash. *Timnath-serah* is still in existence (see at chap. xix. 50). *Mount Gaash*, however, has not been discovered.—Ver. 31. Joshua's labours had not remained without effect. During his own lifetime, and that of the elders who outlived him, and who had seen all that the Lord did for Israel, all Israel served the Lord. "The elders" are the rulers and leaders of the nation. The account of the burial of Joseph's bones, which the Israelites had brought with them from Egypt to Canaan (Ex. xiii. 19), is placed after the account of Joshua's death, because it could not have been introduced before without interrupting the connected account of the labours of Joshua; and it would not do to pass it over without notice altogether, not only because the fact of their bringing the bones with them had been mentioned in the book of Exodus, but also because the Israelites thereby fulfilled the promise given by their fathers to Joseph when he died. The burial of Joseph in the piece of field which Jacob had purchased at Shechem (*vid.* Gen. xxxiii. 19) had no doubt taken place immediately after the division of the land, when Joseph's descendants received Shechem

and the field there for an inheritance. This piece of field, however, they chose for a burial-place for Joseph's bones, not only because Jacob had purchased it, but in all probability chiefly because Jacob had sanctified it for his descendants by building an altar there (Gen. xxxiii. 20). The death and burial of Eleazar, who stood by Joshua's side in the guidance of the nation, are mentioned last of all (ver. 33). When Eleazar died, whether shortly before or shortly after Joshua, cannot be determined. He was buried at Gibeah of Phinehas, the place which was given to him upon the mountains of Ephraim, *i.e.* as his inheritance. *Gibeath Phinehas*, *i.e.* hill of Phinehas, is apparently a proper name, like Gibeah of Saul (1 Sam. xv. 34, etc.). The situation, however, is uncertain. According to *Eusebius* (*Onom. s. v.* Γαβαάς), it was upon the mountains of Ephraim, in the tribe of Benjamin, and was at that time a place named *Gabatha*, the name also given to it by *Josephus* (Ant. v. 1, 29), about twelve Roman miles from Eleutheropolis. This statement is certainly founded upon an error, at least so far as the number twelve is concerned. It is a much more probable supposition, that it is the Levitical town *Geba* of Benjamin, on the north-east of Ramah (chap. xviii. 24), and the name *Gibeah* of Phinehas might be explained on the ground that this place had become the hereditary property of Phinehas, which would be perfectly reconcilable with its selection as one of the priests' cities. As the priests, for example, were not the sole possessors of the towns ceded to them in the possessions of the different tribes, the Israelites might have presented Phinehas with that portion of the city which was not occupied by the priests, and also with the field, as a reward for the services he had rendered to the congregation (Num. xxv. 7 sqq.), just as Caleb and Joshua had been specially considered; in which case Phinehas might dwell in his own hereditary possessions in a priests' city. The situation, "upon the mountains of Ephraim," is not at variance with this view, as these mountains extended, according to Judg. iv. 5, etc., far into the territory of Benjamin (see at chap. xi. 21). The majority of commentators, down to *Knobel*, have thought the place intended to be a *Gibeah* in the tribe of Ephraim, namely the present *Jeeb* or *Jibia*, by the Wady Jib, on the north of Guphna, towards Neapolis (Sichem: see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 80), though there is nothing whatever to favour this except the name.

With the death of Eleazar the high priest, the contemporary of Joshua, the times of Joshua came to a close, so that the account of

Eleazar's death formed a very fitting termination to the book. In some MSS. and editions of the Septuagint, there is an additional clause relating to the high priest Phinehas and the apostasy of the Israelites after Joshua's death; but this is merely taken from Judg. ii. 6, 11 sqq. and iii. 7, 12 sqq., and arbitrarily appended to the book of Joshua.

# THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

## INTRODUCTION.

### CONTENTS AND CHARACTER, ORIGIN AND SOURCES, OF THE BOOK OF JUDGES.

THE book of Judges, headed *Shophetim* in the Hebrew Bibles, and *Κριταί* in the Alexandrian version, and called *liber Judicum* in the Vulgate, contains the history of the Israelitish theocracy for a period of about 350 years, from the death of Joshua to the death of Samson, or to the time of the prophet Samuel. It may be divided according to its contents into three parts: (1) an introduction (chap. i.–iii. 6); (2) the history of the several judges (chap. iii. 7–xvi. 31); and (3) a twofold appendix (chap. xvii.–xxi.). In the *Introduction* the prophetic author of the book first of all takes a general survey of those facts which exhibited most clearly the behaviour of the Israelites to the Canaanites who were left in the land after the death of Joshua, and closes his survey with the reproof of their behaviour by the angel of the Lord (chap. i. 1–ii. 5). He then describes in a general manner the attitude of Israel to the Lord its God and that of the Lord to His people during the time of the judges, and represents this period as a constant alternation of humiliation through hostile oppression, when the nation fell away from its God, and deliverance out of the power of its enemies by judges whom God raised up and endowed with the power of His Spirit, whenever the people returned to the Lord (chap. ii. 6–iii. 6). This is followed in the *body of the work* (chap. iii. 7–xvi. 31) by the history of the several oppressions of Israel on the part of foreign nations, with the deliverance effected by the judges who were raised up by God, and whose deeds are for the most part elaborately described in chronological order, and introduced by the standing formula, "And the children of Israel

did evil in the sight of the Lord," etc.; or, "And the children of Israel again did evil (added to do evil)," etc. They are arranged in six historical groups: (1) the oppression by the Mesopotamian king, Chushan-rishathaim, with the deliverance from this oppression through *Othniel* the judge (chap. iii. 7–11); (2) the oppression by the Moabitish king Eglon, with the deliverance effected through *Ehud* the judge (chap. iii. 12-30), and the victory achieved by *Shamgar* over the Philistines (chap. iii. 31); (3) the subjugation of Israel by the Canaanitish king Jabin, and the deliverance effected through the prophetess *Deborah* and *Barak* the judge (chap. iv.), with Deborah's song of victory (chap. v.); (4) the oppression by the Midianites, and the deliverance from these enemies through the judge *Gideon*, who was called to be the deliverer of Israel through an appearance of the angel of the Lord (chap. vi.–viii.), with the history of the three years' reign of his son Abimelech (chap. ix.), and brief notices of the two judges *Tola* and *Jair* (chap. x. 1–5); (5) the giving up of the Israelites into the power of the Ammonites and Philistines, and their deliverance from the Ammonitish oppression by *Jephthah* (chap. x. 6–xii. 7), with brief notices of the three judges *Ibzan*, *Elon*, and *Abdon* (chap. xii. 8–15); (6) the oppression by the Philistines, with the account of the life and deeds of *Samson* the judge, who began to deliver Israel out of the power of these foes (chap. xiii.–xvi.). To this there are added two *appendices* in chap. xvii.–xxi.: viz. (1) the account of the worship of images by the Ephraimite Micah, and the transportation of that worship by the Danites to Laish-Dan (chap. xvii. xviii.); and (2) the infamous conduct of the inhabitants of Gibeah, and the war of revenge which was waged by the congregation of Israel against the tribe of Benjamin as a punishment for the crime (chap. xix.–xxi.). Both these events occurred in the earliest part of the period of the judges, as we may gather, in the case of the first, from a comparison of chap. xviii. 1 with chap. i. 34, and in that of the second from a comparison of chap. xx. 28 with Josh. xxii. 13 and xxiv. 33; and they are merely placed at the end of the book in the form of appendices, because they could not well be introduced into the six complete historical *tableaux;* although, so far as the facts themselves are concerned, they are intimately connected with the contents and aim of the book of Judges, inasmuch as they depict the religious and moral circumstances of the times in the most striking manner in two pictures drawn from life. The relation in which the three parts stand to one another, therefore, is this: the introduction

depicts the basis on which the deeds of the judges were founded, and the appendices furnish confirmatory evidence of the spirit of the age as manifested in those deeds. The whole book, however, is pervaded and ruled by the idea distinctly expressed in the introduction (chap. ii. 1-3, 11-22), that the Lord left those Canaanites who had not been exterminated by Joshua still in the land, to prove to Israel through them whether it would obey His commandments, and that He chastised and punished His people through them for their disobedience and idolatry; but that as soon as they recognised His chastening hand in the punishment, and returned to Him with penitence and implored His help, He had compassion upon them again in His gracious love, and helped them to victory over their foes, so that, notwithstanding the repeated acts of faithlessness on the part of His people, the Lord remained ever faithful in His deeds, and stedfastly maintained His covenant.

We must not look to the book of Judges, therefore, for a complete history of the period of the judges, or one which throws light upon the development of the Israelites on every side. The character of the book, as shown in its contents and the arrangement of the materials, corresponds entirely to the character of the times over which it extends. The time of the judges did not form a new stage in the development of the nation of God. It was not till the time of Samuel and David, when this period was ended, that a new stage began. It was rather a transition period, the time of free, unfettered development, in which the nation was to take root in the land presented to it by God as its inheritance, to familiarize itself with the theocratic constitution given to it by the Mosaic law, and by means of the peculiar powers and gifts conferred upon it by God to acquire for itself that independence and firm footing in Canaan, within the limits of the laws, ordinances, and rights of the covenant, which Jehovah had promised, and the way to which He had prepared through the revelations He had made to them. This task could be accomplished without any ruler directly appointed by the Lord. The first thing which the tribes had to do was to root out such Canaanites as remained in the land, that they might not only establish themselves in the unrestricted and undisputed possession and enjoyment of the land and its productions, but also avert the danger which threatened them on the part of these tribes of being led away to idolatry and immorality. The Lord had promised them His help in this conflict, if they would only walk in His commandments. The maintenance of civil order and the administration of justice

were in the hands of the heads of tribes, families, and households; and for the relation in which the congregation stood to the Lord its God, it possessed the necessary organs and media in the hereditary priesthood of the tribe of Levi, whose head could inquire the will of God in all cases of difficulty through the right of the Urim, and make it known to the nation. Now as long as the generation, which had seen the wonderful works of the Lord in the time of Joshua, was still living, so long did the nation continue faithful to the covenant of its God, and the tribes maintain a successful conflict with the still remaining Canaanites (chap. i. 1–20, 22–25). But the very next generation, to which those mighty acts of the Lord were unknown, began to forget its God, to grow weary and lax in its conflicts with the Canaanites, to make peace with them, and to mix up the worship of Jehovah, the jealous and holy God, with the worship of Baal and Astarte, the Canaanitish deities of nature, and even to substitute the latter in its place. With the loss of love and fidelity to the Lord, the bond of unity which formed the tribes into *one* congregation of Jehovah was also broken. The different tribes began to follow their own separate interests (*vid.* chap. v. 15–17, 23, viii. 5–8), and eventually even to oppose and make war upon one another; whilst Ephraim was bent upon securing to itself the headship of all the tribes, though without making any vigorous efforts to carry on the war with the oppressors of Israel (*vid.* chap. viii. 1 sqq., xii. 1–6). Consequently Israel suffered more and more from the oppression of heathen nations, to which God gave it up as a chastisement for its idolatry; and it would have become altogether a prey to its foes, had not the faithful covenant God taken compassion upon it in its distress as often as it cried to Him, and sent deliverers (מוֹשִׁיעִים, chap. iii. 9, 15; cf. Neh. ix. 27) in those judges, after whom both the age in question and the book before us are called. There are twelve of these judges mentioned, or rather thirteen, as Deborah the prophetess also judged Israel (chap. iv. 4); but there are only eight (Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson), who are described as performing acts by which Israel obtained deliverance from its oppressors. Of the other five (Tolah, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon) we are merely told that they judged Israel so many years. The reason for this we are not to seek in the fact that the report of the heroic deeds of these judges had not been handed down to the time when our book was written. It is to be found simply in the fact that these judges waged no wars and smote no foes.

The judges (*shophetim*) were men who procured justice or right for the people of Israel, not only by delivering them out of the power of their foes, but also by administering the laws and rights of the Lord (chap. ii. 16–19). *Judging* in this sense was different from the administration of civil jurisprudence, and included the idea of government such as would be expected from a king. Thus in 1 Sam. viii. 5, 6, the people are said to have asked Samuel to give them a king "to judge us," to procure us right, *i.e.* to govern us; and in 2 Kings xv. 5 Jotham is said to have *judged*, *i.e.* governed the nation during the illness of his father. The name given to these men (*shophetim*, judges) was evidently founded upon Deut. xvii. 9 and xix. 17, where it is assumed that in after-times there would be a *shophet*, who would stand by the side of the high priest as the supreme judge or leader of the state in Israel. The judges themselves corresponded to the δικασταί of the Tyrians (*Josephus*, c. Ap. i. 21) and the *Suffetes* of the Carthaginians (*qui summus Pœnis est magistratus*, *Liv.* Hist. xxvii. 37, and xxx. 7), with this difference, however, that as a rule the judges of Israel were called directly by the Lord, and endowed with miraculous power for the conquest of the enemies of Israel; and if, after delivering the people from their oppressors, they continued to the time of their death to preside over the public affairs of the whole nation, or merely of several of its tribes, yet they did not follow one another in a continuous line and unbroken succession, because the ordinary administration of justice and government of the commonwealth still remained in the hands of the heads of the tribes and the elders of the people, whilst occasionally there were also prophets and high priests, such as Deborah, Eli, and Samuel (chap. iv. 4; 1 Sam. iv. 18, vii. 15), in whom the government was vested. Thus "Othniel delivered the children of Israel," and "judged Israel," by going out to war, smiting Chushan-rishathaim, the Aramæan king, and giving the land rest for forty years (chap. iii. 9–11); and the same with Ehud and several others. On the other hand, Shamgar (chap. iii. 31) and Samson (chap. xiii.–xvi.) are apparently called judges of Israel, simply as opponents and conquerors of the Philistines, without their having taken any part in the administration of justice. Others, again, neither engaged in war nor gained victories. No warlike deeds are recorded of Tola; and yet it is stated in chap. x. 1, that "he rose up after Abimelech to deliver Israel (לְהוֹשִׁיעַ אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל), and judged Israel twenty-three years;" whilst of his successor Jair nothing more is said, than that "he judged Israel twenty-two

years." Both of these had delivered and judged Israel, not by victories gained over enemies, but by placing themselves at the head of the tribes over whom Gideon had been judge, at the termination of the ephemeral reign of Abimelech, and by preventing the recurrence of hostile oppression, through the influence they exerted, as well as by what they did for the establishment of the nation in its fidelity to the Lord. This also applies to Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, who followed Jephthah in direct succession (chap. xii. 8–15). Of these five judges also, it is not stated that Jehovah raised them up or called them. In all probability they merely undertook the government at the wish of the tribes whose judges they were; whilst at the same time it is to be observed, that such cases as these did not occur until the desire for a king had begun to manifest itself throughout the nation (chap. viii. 22, 23).

But if all the judges did not fight against outward enemies of Israel, it might appear strange that the book of Judges should close with the death of Samson, without mentioning Eli and Samuel, as both of them judged Israel, the one forty years, the other for the whole of his life (1 Sam. iv. 18, vii. 15). But Eli was really high priest, and what he did as judge was merely the natural result of his office of high priest; and Samuel was called to be the prophet of the Lord, and as such he delivered Israel from the oppression of the Philistines, not with the sword and by the might of his arm, like the judges before him, but by the power of the word, with which he converted Israel to the Lord, and by the might of his prayer, with which he sought and obtained the victory from the Lord (1 Sam. vii. 3–10); so that his judicial activity not only sprang out of his prophetic office, but was continually sustained thereby. The line of actual judges terminated with Samson; and with his death the office of judge was carried to the grave. Samson was followed immediately by Samuel, whose prophetic labours formed the link between the period of the judges and the introduction of royalty into Israel. The forty years of oppression on the part of the Philistines, from which Samson began to deliver Israel (chap. xiii. 1, 5), were brought to a close by the victory which the Israelites gained through Samuel's prayer (1 Sam. vii.), as will be readily seen when we have determined the chronology of the period of the judges, in the introductory remarks to the exposition of the body of the book. This victory was not gained by the Israelites till twenty years after Eli's death (comp. 1 Sam. vii. 2 with vi. 1 and iv. 18). Consequently of the forty years during which Eli judged Israel as

high priest, only the last twenty fell within the time of the Philistine oppression, the first twenty before it. But both Samuel and Samson were born during the pontificate of Eli; for when Samson's birth was foretold, the Philistines were already ruling over Israel (Judg. xiii. 5). The deeds of Samson fell for the most part within the last twenty years of the Philistine supremacy, *i.e.* not only in the interval between the capture of the ark and death of Eli and the victory which the Israelites achieved through Samuel over these foes, which victory, however, Samson did not live to see, but also in the time when Samuel had been accredited as a prophet of Jehovah, and Jehovah had manifested himself repeatedly to him by word at Shiloh (1 Sam. iii. 20, 21). Consequently Samuel completed the deliverance of Israel out of the power of the Philistines, which Samson had commenced.

The book of Judges, therefore, embraces the whole of the judicial epoch, and gives a faithful picture of the political development of the Israelitish theocracy during that time. The author writes throughout from a prophet's point of view. He applies the standard of the law to the spirit of the age by which the nation was influenced as a whole, and pronounces a stern and severe sentence upon all deviations from the path of rectitude set before it in the law. The unfaithfulness of Israel, which went a whoring again and again after Baal, and was punished for its apostasy from the Lord with oppression from foreign nations, and the faithfulness of the Lord, who sent help to the people whenever it returned to Him in its oppression, by raising up judges who conquered its enemies, are the two historical factors of those times, and the hinges upon which the history turns. In the case of all the judges, it is stated that they judged "Israel," or the "children of Israel;" although it is very obvious, from the accounts of the different deliverances effected, that most of the judges only delivered and judged those tribes who happened to be oppressed and subjugated by their enemies at a particular time. The other tribes, who were spared by this or the other hostile invasion, did not come into consideration in reference to the special design of the historical account, namely, to describe the acts of the Lord in the government of His people, any more than the development of the religious and social life of individual members of the congregation in harmony with the law; inasmuch as the congregation, whether in whole or in part, was merely fulfilling its divinely appointed vocation, so long as it observed the law, and about this there was nothing special to be

related (see the description given of the book of Judges in *Hengstenberg*, Diss. on the Pentateuch, vol. ii. pp. 16 sqq.).

Lastly, if we take a survey of the gradual development of Israel during the times of the judges, we may distinguish three stages in the attitude of the Lord to His constantly rebelling people, and also in the form assumed by the external and internal circumstances of the nation: viz. (1) the period from the commencement of the apostasy of the nation till its deliverance from the rule of the Canaanitish king Jabin, or the time of the judges Othniel, Ehud, and Shamgar, Deborah and Barak (chap. iii.–v.); (2) the time of the Midianitish oppression, with the deliverance effected by Gideon, and the government which followed, viz. of Abimelech and the judges Tola and Jair (chap. vi.–x. 5); (3) the time of the Ammonitish and Philistine supremacy over Israel, with the judges Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon on the one hand, and that of Samson on the other (chap. x. 6–xvi. 31). Three times, for example, the Lord threatens His people with oppression and subjugation by foreign nations, as a punishment for their disobedience and apostasy from Him: viz. (1) at Bochim (chap. ii. 1–4) through the angel of the Lord; (2) on the invasion of the Midianites (chap. vi. 7–10), through the medium of a prophet; and (3) at the commencement of the Ammonitish and Philistine oppression (chap. x. 10–14). The first time He threatens, "the Canaanites shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare to you" (chap. ii. 3); the second time, "I delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all that oppressed you; I said unto you, I am Jehovah, your God; fear not the gods of the Amorites: but ye have not hearkened to my voice" (chap. vi. 9, 10); the third time, "Ye have forsaken me and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more; go and cry unto the gods which ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation" (chap. x. 13, 14). These threats were fulfilled upon the disobedient nation, not only in the fact that they fell deeper and deeper under the oppression of their foes, but by their also becoming disjointed and separated more and more internally. In the first stage, the oppressions from without lasted a tolerably long time: that of Chushan-rishathaim eight years; that of Eglon the Moabite, eighteen; and that of the Canaanitish king Jabin, as much as twenty years (chap. iii. 8, 14, iv. 3). But, on the other hand, after the first, the Israelites had forty years of peace; after the second, eighty; and after the third, again forty years (chap. iii. 11, 30, v.

31). Under Othniel and Ehud all Israel appears to have risen against its oppressors; but under Barak, Reuben and Gilead, Dan and Asher took no part in the conflict of the other tribes (chap. v. 15–17). In the second stage, the Midianitish oppression lasted, it is true, only seven years (chap. vi. 1), and was followed by forty years of rest under Gideon (chap. viii. 28); whilst the three years' government of Abimelech was followed by forty-five years of peace under Tola and Jair (chap. x. 2, 3); but even under Gideon the jealousy of Ephraim was raised to such a pitch against the tribes who had joined in smiting the foe, that it almost led to a civil war (chap. viii. 1–3), and the inhabitants of Succoth and Penuel refused all assistance to the victorious army, and that in so insolent a manner that they were severely punished by Gideon in consequence (chap. viii. 4–9, 14–17); whilst in the election of Abimelech as king of Shechem, the internal decay of the congregation of Israel was brought still more clearly to light (chap. ix.). Lastly, in the third stage, no doubt, Israel was delivered by Jephthah from the eighteen years' bondage on the part of the Ammonites (chap. xi. 8 sqq.), and the tribes to the east of the Jordan, as well as the northern tribes of the land on this side, enjoyed rest under the judges Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon for thirty-one years (chap. xii. 7, 9, 11, 14); but the Philistine oppression lasted till after Samson's death (chap. xiii. 5, xv. 20), and the internal decay increased so much under this hostile pressure, that whilst the Ephraimites, on the one hand, commenced a war against Jephthah, and sustained a terrible defeat at the hands of the tribes on the east of the Jordan (chap. xii. 1–6), on the other hand, the tribes who were enslaved by the Philistines had so little appreciation of the deliverance which God had sent them through Samson, that the men of Judah endeavoured to give up their deliverer to the Philistines (chap. xv. 9–14). Nevertheless the Lord not only helped the nation again, both in its distress and out of its distress, but came nearer and nearer to it with His aid, that it might learn that its help was to be found in God alone. The first deliverers and judges He stirred up by His Spirit, which came upon Othniel and Ehud, and filled them with courage and strength for the conquest of their foes. Barak was summoned to the war by the prophetess Deborah, and inspired by her with the courage to undertake it. Gideon was called to be the deliverer of Israel out of the severe oppression of the Midianites by the appearance of the angel of the Lord, and the victory over the innumerable army of the foe was given by the

Lord, not to the whole of the army which Gideon summoned to the battle, but only to a small company of 300 men, that Israel might not "vaunt themselves against the Lord," and magnify their own power. Lastly, Jephthah and Samson were raised up as deliverers out of the power of the Ammonites and Philistines; and whilst Jephthah was called by the elders of Gilead to be the leader in the war with the Midianites, and sought through a vow to ensure the assistance of God in gaining a victory over them, Samson was set apart from his mother's womb, through the appearance of the angel of the Lord, as the Nazarite who was to begin to deliver Israel out of the power of the Philistines. At the same time there was given to the nation in the person of Samuel, the son for whom the pious Hannah prayed to the Lord, a Nazarite and prophet, who was not only to complete the deliverance from the power of the Philistines which Samson had begun, but to ensure the full conversion of Israel to the Lord its God.

With regard to the *origin* of the book of Judges, it is evident from the repeated remark, "In those days there was no king in Israel, every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (chap. xvii. 6, xxi. 25; cf. chap. xviii. 1, xix. 1), that it was composed at a time when Israel was already rejoicing in the benefits connected with the kingdom. It is true this remark is only to be found in the appendices, and would have no force so far as the date of composition is concerned, if the view held by different critics were well-founded, viz. that these appendices were added by a later hand. But the arguments adduced against the unity of authorship in all three parts, the introduction, the body of the work, and the appendices, will not bear examination. Without the introduction (chap. i. 1–iii. 6) the historical narrative contained in the book would want a foundation, which is absolutely necessary to make it intelligible; and the two appendices supply two supplements of the greatest importance in relation to the development of the tribes of Israel in the time of the judges, and most intimately connected with the design and plan of the rest of the book. It is true that in chap. i., as well as in the two appendices, the prophetic view of the history which prevails in the rest of the book, from chap. ii. 11 to chap. xvi. 31, is not distinctly apparent; but this difference may be fully explained from the contents of the two portions, which neither furnish the occasion nor supply the materials for any such view,—like the account of the royal supremacy of Abimelech in chap. ix., in which the so-called "theocratical pragmatism" is also wanting. But, on

the other hand, all these portions are just as rich in allusions to the Mosaic law and the legal worship as the other parts of the book, so that both in their contents and their form they would be unintelligible apart from the supremacy of the law in Israel. The discrepancies which some fancy they have discovered between chap. i. 8 and chap. i. 21, and also between chap. i. 19 and chap. iii. 3, vanish completely on a correct interpretation of the passages themselves. And no such differences can be pointed out in language or style as would overthrow the unity of authorship, or even render it questionable. Even *Stähelin* observes (*spez. Einl.* p. 77): "I cannot find in chap. xvii.–xxi. the (special) author of chap. i.–ii. 5; and the arguments adduced by *Bertheau* in favour of this, from modes of expression to be found in the two sections, appear to me to be anything but conclusive, simply because the very same modes of expression occur elsewhere: יוֹאֵל לָשֶׁבֶת in Ex. ii. 21; חִתֵּן in Num. x. 29; נָתַן בְּיָד, Josh. x. 30, xi. 8, Judg. vi. 1, xi. 21; נָתַן לְאִשָּׁה, Gen. xxix. 28, xxx. 4, 9, xxxiv. 8, etc.; הָבָה לְפִי חָרֶב, Num. xxi. 24, Deut. xiii. 16, Josh. viii. 24, x. 28, 30, 32, etc. Undoubtedly שְׁאַל בְּיִ only occurs in Judg. i. 1 and the appendix, and never earlier; but there is a similar expression in Num. xxvii. 21 and Josh. ix. 14, and the first passage shows how the mode of expression could be so abbreviated. I find no preterites with וְ, used in the place of the future with וַ in Judg. i.; for it is evident from the construction that the preterite must be used in vers. 8, 16, 25, etc.; and thus the only thing left that could strike us at all is the idiom שָׁלַח בָּאֵשׁ, which is common to both sections, but which is too isolated, and occurs again moreover in 2 Kings viii. 12 and Ps. lxxiv. 7." But even the "peculiar phrases belonging to a later age," which *Stähelin* and *Bertheau* discover in chap. xvii.–xxi. do not furnish any tenable proof of this assertion. The phrase "from Dan to Beersheba," in chap. xx. 1, was formed after the settlement of the Danites in Laish-Dan, which took place at the commencement of the time of the judges. נָשָׂא נָשִׁים, in chap. xxi. 23, is also to be found in Ruth i. 4; and the others either occur again in the books of Samuel, or have been wrongly interpreted.

We have a firm *datum* for determining more minutely the time when the book of Judges was written, in the statement in chap. i. 21, that the Jebusites in Jerusalem had not been rooted out by the Israelites, but dwelt there with the children of Benjamin "*unto this day.*" The Jebusites remained in possession of Jerusalem, or of the citadel Zion, or the upper town of Jerusalem, until the time

when David went against Jerusalem after the twelve tribes had acknowledged him as king, took the fortress of Zion, and made it the capital of his kingdom under the name of the city of David (2 Sam. v. 6–9; 1 Chron. xi. 4–9). Consequently the book was written before this event, either during the first seven years of the reign of David at Hebron, or during the reign of Saul, under whom the Israelites already enjoyed the benefits of a monarchical government, since Saul not only fought with bravery against all the enemies of Israel, and "delivered Israel out of the hands of them that spoiled them" (1 Sam. xiv. 47, 48), but exerted himself to restore the authority of the law of God in his kingdom, as is evident from the fact that he banished the wizards and necromancers out of the land (1 Sam. xxviii. 9). The talmudical statement therefore in *Bava-bathra* (f. 14*b* and 15*a*), to the effect that Samuel was the author of the book, may be so far correct, that if it was not written by Samuel himself towards the close of his life, it was written at his instigation by a younger prophet of his school. More than this it is impossible to decide. So much, however, is at all events certain, that the book does not contain traces of a later age either in its contents or its language, and that chap. xviii. 30 does not refer to the time of the captivity (see the commentary on this passage).

With regard to the *sources* of which the author made use, unless we are prepared to accept untenable hypotheses as having all the validity of historical facts, it is impossible to establish anything more than that he drew his materials not only from oral tradition, but also from written documents. This is obvious from the exactness of the historical and chronological accounts, and still more so from the abundance of characteristic and original traits and expressions that meet the reader in the historical pictures, some of which are very elaborate. The historical fidelity, exactness, and vividness of description apparent in every part of the book are only to be explained in a work which embraces a period of 350 years, on the supposition that the author made use of trustworthy records, or the testimony of persons who were living when the events occurred. This stands out so clearly in every part of the book, that it is admitted even by critics who are compelled by their own dogmatical assumptions to deny the actual truth or reality of the miraculous parts of the history. With regard to the nature of these sources, however, we can only conjecture that chap. i. and xvii.–xxi. were founded upon written accounts, with which the author of the book of Joshua was also acquainted; and that the accounts of Deborah

and Barak, of Gideon, and of the life of Samson, were taken from different writings, inasmuch as these sections are distinguished from one another by many peculiarities. (Further remarks on this subject will be found in the exposition itself.)

## EXPOSITION.

### I.—ATTITUDE OF ISRAEL TOWARDS THE CANAANITES, AND TOWARDS JEHOVAH ITS GOD.

#### CHAP. I.—III. 6.

##### HOSTILITIES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND THE CANAANITES AFTER JOSHUA'S DEATH.—CHAP. I. 1—II. 5.

AFTER the death of Joshua the tribes of Israel resolved to continue the war with the Canaanites, that they might exterminate them altogether from the land that had been given them for an inheritance. In accordance with the divine command, Judah commenced the strife in association with Simeon, smote the king of Bezek, conquered Jerusalem, Hebron and Debir upon the mountains, Zephath in the south land, and three of the chief cities of the Philistines, and took possession of the mountains; but was unable to exterminate the inhabitants of the plain, just as the Benjaminites were unable to drive the Jebusites out of Jerusalem (vers. 1–21). The tribe of Joseph also conquered the city of Bethel (vers. 22–26); but from the remaining towns of the land neither the Manassites, nor the Ephraimites, nor the tribes of Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali expelled the Canaanites: all that they did was to make them tributary (vers. 27–33). The Danites were actually forced back by the Amorites out of the plain into the mountains, because the latter maintained their hold of the towns of the plain, although the house of Joseph conquered them and made them tributary (vers. 34–36). The angel of the Lord therefore appeared at Bochim, and declared to the Israelites, that because they had not obeyed the command of the Lord, to make no covenant with the Canaanites, the Lord would no more drive out these nations, but would cause them and their gods to become a snare to them (chap. ii. 1–5).

From this divine revelation it is evident, on the one hand, that the failure to exterminate the Canaanites had its roots in the negligence of the tribes of Israel; and on the other hand, that the accounts of the wars of the different tribes, and the enumeration of the towns in the different possessions out of which the Canaanites were not expelled, were designed to show clearly the attitude of the Israelites to the Canaanites in the age immediately following the death of Joshua, or to depict the historical basis on which the development of Israel rested in the era of the judges.

Vers. 1–7. With the words "*Now, after the death of Joshua, it came to pass,*" the book of Judges takes up the thread of the history where the book of Joshua had dropped it, to relate the further development of the covenant nation. A short time before his death, Joshua had gathered the elders and heads of the people around him, and set before them the entire destruction of the Canaanites through the omnipotent help of the Lord, if they would only adhere with fidelity to the Lord; whilst, at the same time, he also pointed out to them the dangers of apostasy from the Lord (Josh. xxiii.). Remembering this admonition and warning, the Israelites inquired, after Joshua's death, who should begin the war against the Canaanites who still remained to be destroyed; and the Lord answered, "*Judah shall go up: behold, I have delivered the land into his hand*" (vers. 1, 2). שָׁאַל בַּיהוָה, to ask with Jehovah for the purpose of obtaining a declaration of the divine will, is substantially the same as שָׁאַל בְּמִשְׁפַּט הָאוּרִים (Num. xxvii. 21), to inquire the will of the Lord through the Urim and Thummim of the high priest. From this time forward inquiring of the Lord occurs with greater frequency (*vid.* chap. xx. 23, 27; 1 Sam. x. 22, xxii. 10, xxiii. 2, etc.), as well as the synonymous expression "ask of *Elohim*" in chap. xviii. 5, xx. 18; 1 Sam. xiv. 37, xxii. 13; 1 Chron. xiv. 10; whereas Moses and Joshua received direct revelations from God. The phrase יַעֲלֶה אֶל־הַכְּנַעֲנִי, "*go up to the Canaanites,*" is defined more precisely by the following words, "*to fight against them;*" so that עָלָה is used here also to denote the campaign against a nation (see at Josh. viii. 1), without there being any necessity, however, for us to take אֶל in the sense of עַל. עָלָה בַתְּחִלָּה signifies "*to go up in the beginning,*" *i.e.* to open or commence the war; not to hold the commandership in the war, as the *Sept.*, *Vulgate*, and others render it (see chap. x. 18, where יָחֵל לְהִלָּחֵם is expressly distinguished from being the chief or leader). Moreover, מִי does not mean who? *i.e.* what person, but, as the answer clearly shows, what tribe? Now a

tribe could open the war, and take the lead at the head of the other tribes, but could not be the commander-in-chief. In the present instance, however, Judah did not even enter upon the war at the head of all the tribes, but simply joined with the tribe of Simeon to make a common attack upon the Canaanites in their inheritance. The promise in ver. 2*b* is the same as that in Josh. vi. 2, viii. 1, etc. "*The land*" is not merely the land allotted to the tribe of Judah, or Judah's inheritance, as *Bertheau* supposes, for Judah conquered Jerusalem (ver. 8), which had been allotted to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 28), but the land of Canaan generally, so far as it was still in the possession of the Canaanites and was to be conquered by Judah. The reason why Judah was to commence the hostilities is not to be sought for in the fact that Judah was the most numerous of all the tribes (*Rosenmüller*), but rather in the fact that Judah had already been appointed by the blessing of Jacob (Gen. xlix. 8 sqq.) to be the champion of his brethren.—Ver. 3. Judah invited Simeon his brother, *i.e.* their brother tribe, to take part in the contest. This epithet is applied to Simeon, not because Simeon and Judah, the sons of Jacob, were the children of the same mother, Leah (Gen. xxix. 33, 35), but because Simeon's inheritance was within the territory of Judah (Josh. xix. 1 sqq.), so that Simeon was more closely connected with Judah than any of the other tribes. "*Come up with me into my lot* (into the inheritance that has fallen to me by lot), *that we may fight against the Canaanites, and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him*," *i.e.* joined with Judah in making war upon the Canaanites. This request shows that Judah's principal intention was to make war upon and exterminate the Canaanites who remained in his own and Simeon's inheritance. The different expressions employed, *come up* and *go*, are to be explained from the simple fact that the whole of Simeon's territory was in the *shephelah* and *Negeb*, whereas Judah had received the heart of his possessions upon the mountains.

Ver. 4. "*And Judah went up*," *sc.* against the Canaanites, to make war upon them. The completion of the sentence is supplied by the context, more especially by ver. 2. So far as the sense is concerned, *Rosenmüller* has given the correct explanation of וַיַּעַל, "Judah entered upon the expedition along with Simeon." "*And they smote the Canaanites and the Perizzites in Bezek*, 10,000 *men*." The result of the war is summed up briefly in these words; and then in vers. 5–7 the capture and punishment of the hostile king *Adoni-bezek* is specially mentioned as being the most important

event in the war. The foe is described as consisting of Canaanites and Perizzites, two tribes which have been already named in Gen. xiii. 7 and xxxiv. 30 as representing the entire population of Canaan, "*the Canaanites*" comprising principally those in the lowlands by the Jordan and the Mediterranean (*vid.* Num. xiii. 29; Josh. xi. 3), and "*the Perizzites*" the tribes who dwelt in the mountains (Josh. xvii. 15). On the *Perizzites*, see Gen. xiii. 7. The place mentioned, *Bezek*, is only mentioned once more, namely in 1 Sam. xi. 8, where it is described as being situated between Gibeah of Saul (see at Josh. xviii. 28) and Jabesh in Gilead. According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Bezek*), there were at that time two places very near together both named *Bezek*, seventeen Roman miles from Neapolis on the road to *Scythopolis*, *i.e.* about seven hours to the north of Nabulus on the road to Beisan. This description is perfectly reconcilable with 1 Sam. xi. 8. On the other hand, *Clericus* (*ad h. l.*), *Rosenmüller*, and *v. Raumer* suppose the Bezek mentioned here to have been situated in the territory of Judah; though this cannot be proved, since it is merely based upon an inference drawn from ver. 3, viz. that Judah and Simeon simply attacked the Canaanites in their own allotted territories,—an assumption which is very uncertain. There is no necessity, however, to adopt the opposite and erroneous opinion of *Bertheau*, that the tribes of Judah and Simeon commenced their expedition to the south from the gathering-place of the united tribes at Shechem, and fought the battle with the Canaanitish forces in that region upon this expedition; since Shechem is not described in Josh. xxiv. as the gathering-place of the united tribes, *i.e.* of the whole of the military force of Israel, and the battle fought with Adoni-bezek did not take place at the time when the tribes prepared to leave Shiloh and march to their own possessions after the casting of the lots was over. The simplest explanation is, that when the tribes of Judah and Simeon prepared to make war upon the Canaanites in the possessions allotted to them, they were threatened or attacked by the forces of the Canaanites collected together by Adoni-bezek, so that they had first of all to turn their arms against this king before they could attack the Canaanites in their own tribe-land. As the precise circumstances connected with the occasion and course of this war have not been recorded, there is nothing to hinder the supposition that Adoni-bezek may have marched from the north against the possessions of Benjamin and Judah, possibly with the intention of joining the Canaanites in Jebus, and the Anakim in Hebron and upon the

mountains in the south, and then making a combined attack upon the Israelites. This might induce or even compel Judah and Simeon to attack this enemy first of all, and even to pursue him till they overtook him at his capital Bezek, and smote him with all his army. *Adoni-bezek, i.e.* lord of Bezek, is the official title of this king, whose proper name is unknown.

In the principal engagement, in which 10,000 Canaanites fell, Adoni-bezek escaped; but he was overtaken in his flight (vers. 6, 7), and so mutilated, by the cutting off of his thumbs and great toes, that he could neither carry arms nor flee. With this cruel treatment, which the Athenians are said to have practised upon the captured Ægynetes (*Ælian, var. hist.* ii. 9), the Israelites simply executed the just judgment of retribution, as Adoni-bezek was compelled to acknowledge, for the cruelties which he had inflicted upon captives taken by himself. "*Seventy kings*," he says in ver. 7, "*with the thumbs of their hands and feet cut off, were gathering under my table. As I have done, so God hath requited me.*" מְקֻצְּצִים . . . בְּהֹנוֹת, *lit.* "cut in the thumbs of their hands and feet" (see *Ewald*, Lehrb. § 284, *c.*). The object to מְלַקְּטִים, "gathering up" (viz. crumbs), is easily supplied from the idea of the verb itself. Gathering up crumbs under the table, like the dogs in Matt. xv. 27, is a figurative representation of the most shameful treatment and humiliation. "Seventy" is a round number, and is certainly an exaggerated hyperbole here. For even if every town of importance in Canaan had its own king, the fact that, when Joshua conquered the land, he only smote thirty-one kings, is sufficient evidence that there can hardly have been seventy kings to be found in all Canaan. It appears strange, too, that the king of Bezek is not mentioned in connection with the conquest of Canaan under Joshua. Bezek was probably situated more on the side towards the valley of the Jordan, where the Israelites under Joshua did not go. Possibly, too, the culminating point of Adoni-bezek's power, when he conquered so many kings, was before the arrival of the Israelites in Canaan, and it may at that time have begun to decline; so that he did not venture to undertake anything against the combined forces of Israel under Joshua, and it was not till the Israelitish tribes separated to go to their own possessions, that he once more tried the fortunes of war and was defeated. The children of Judah took him with them to Jerusalem, where he died.

Vers. 8–15. After his defeat, Judah and Simeon went against Jerusalem, and conquered this city and smote it, *i.e.* its inhabitants,

with the edge of the sword, or without quarter (see Gen. xxxiv. 26), and set the city on fire. שִׁלַּח בָּאֵשׁ, to set on fire, to give up to the flames, only occurs again in chap. xx. 48, 2 Kings viii. 12, and Ps. lxxiv. 7. Joshua had already slain the king of Jerusalem and his four allies after the battle at Gibeon (Josh. x. 3, 18-26), but had not conquered Jerusalem, his capital. This was not done till after Joshua's death, when it was taken by the tribes of Judah and Simeon. But even after this capture, and notwithstanding the fact that it had been set on fire, it did not come into the sole and permanent possession of the Israelites. After the conquerors had advanced still farther, to make war upon the Canaanites in the mountains, in the *Negeb*, and in the *shephelah* (vers. 9 sqq.), the Jebusites took it again and rebuilt it, so that in the following age it was regarded by the Israelites as a foreign city (chap. xix. 11, 12). The Benjaminites, to whom Jerusalem had fallen by lot, were no more able to drive out the Jebusites than the Judæans had been. Consequently they continued to live by the side of the Benjaminites (chap. i. 21) and the Judæans (Josh xv. 63), who settled, as time rolled on, in this the border city of their possessions; and in the upper town especially, upon the top of Mount Zion, they established themselves so firmly, that they could not be dislodged until David succeeded in wresting this fortress from them, and made the city of Zion the capital of his kingdom (2 Sam. v. 6 sqq.).[1]—Vers. 9 sqq. After the conquest of Jerusalem, the children of Judah (together with the Simeonites, ver. 3) went down into their own possessions, to make war upon the Canaanites in the mountains, the *Negeb*, and the *shephelah* (see at Josh. xv. 48, xxi. 33), and to exterminate them. They first of all conquered Hebron and Debir upon the mountains (vers. 10–15), as has already been related in Josh. xv.

[1] In this way we may reconcile in a very simple manner the different accounts concerning Jerusalem in Josh. xv. 63, Judg. i. 8, 21, xix. 11 sqq., 1 Sam. xvii. 54, and 2 Sam. v. vi., without there being the slightest necessity to restrict the conquest mentioned in this verse to the city that was built round Mount Zion, as *Josephus* does, to the exclusion of the citadel upon Zion itself; or to follow *Bertheau*, and refer the account of the Jebusites dwelling by the children of Judah in Jerusalem (Josh. xv. 63) to a time subsequent to the conquest of the citadel of Zion by David,—an interpretation which is neither favoured by the circumstance that the Jebusite Araunah still held some property there in the time of David (2 Sam. xxiv. 21 sqq.), nor by the passage in 1 Kings ix. 20 sqq., according to which the descendants of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites who still remained in the land were made into tributary bondmen by Solomon, and set to work upon the buildings that he had in hand.

14–19 (see the commentary on this passage). The forms עִלִּית and תַּחְתִּית (ver. 15), instead of עִלִּיוֹת and תַּחְתִּיוֹת (Josh. xv. 19), are in the singular, and are construed with the plural form of the feminine גֻּלּוֹת, because this is used in the sense of the singular, "a spring" (see *Ewald*, § 318, *a.*).

Ver. 16. The notice respecting the Kenites, that they went up out of the palm-city with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah in the south of Arad, and dwelt there with the Judæans, is introduced here into the account of the wars of the tribe of Judah, because this migration of the Kenites belonged to the time between the conquest of Debir (vers. 12 sqq.) and Zephath (ver. 17); and the notice itself was of importance, as forming the intermediate link between Num. x. 29 sqq., and the later allusions to the Kenites in Judg. iv. 11, v. 24, 1 Sam. xv. 6, xxvii. 10, xxx. 29. "*The children of the Kenite*," *i.e.* the descendants of Hobab, the brother-in-law of Moses (compare chap. iv. 11, where the name is given, but קֵינִי occurs instead of קֵנִי, with Num. x. 29), were probably a branch of the Kenites mentioned in Gen. xv. 19 along with the other tribes of Canaan, which had separated from the other members of its own tribe before the time of Moses and removed to the land of Midian, where Moses met with a hospitable reception from their chief Reguel on his flight from Egypt. These Kenites had accompanied the Israelites to Canaan at the request of Moses (Num. x. 29 sqq.); and when the Israelites advanced into Canaan itself, they had probably remained as nomads in the neighbourhood of the Jordan near to Jericho, without taking any part in the wars of Joshua. But when the tribe of Judah had exterminated the Canaanites out of Hebron, Debir, and the neighbourhood, after the death of Joshua, they went into the desert of Judah with the Judæans as they moved farther towards the south; and going to the south-western edge of this desert, to the district on the south of Arad (Tell Arad, see at Num. xxi. 1), they settled there on the border of the steppes of the Negeb (Num. xxxiii. 40). "*The palm-city*" was a name given to the city of Jericho, according to chap. iii. 13, Deut. xxxiv. 3, 2 Chron. xxviii. 15. There is no ground whatever for thinking of some other town of this name in the desert of Arabia, near the palm-forest, *φοινικών*, of *Diod. Sic.* (iii. 42) and *Strabo* (p. 776), as *Clericus* and *Bertheau* suppose, even if it could be proved that there was any such town in the neighbourhood. וַיֵּלֶךְ, "*then he went* (the branch of the Kenites just referred to) *and dwelt with the people*" (of the children of Judah), that is to

say, with the people of Israel in the desert of Judah. The subject to וַיֵּלֶךְ is קֵינִי, the Kenite, as a tribe.

Vers. 17–21. *Remaining Conquests of the combined Tribes of Judah and Simeon.*—Ver. 17. *Zephath* was in the territory of Simeon. This is evident not only from the fact that Hormah (Zephath) had been allotted to the tribe of Simeon (compare Josh. xix. 4 with chap. xv. 30), but also from the words, "Judah went with Simeon his brother," which point back to ver. 3, and express the thought that Judah went with Simeon into his territory to drive out the Canaanites who were still to be found there. Going southwards from Debir, Judah and Simeon smote the Canaanites at Zephath on the southern boundary of Canaan, and executed the ban upon this town, from which it received the name of *Hormah*, *i.e.* banning. The town has been preserved in the ruins of *Sepâta*, on the south of Khalasa or Elusa (see at Josh. xii. 14). In the passage mentioned, the king of Hormah or Zephath is named among the kings who were slain by Joshua. It does not follow from this, however, that Joshua must necessarily have conquered his capital Zephath; the king of Jerusalem was also smitten by Joshua and slain, without Jerusalem itself being taken at that time. But even if Zephath were taken by the Israelites, as soon as the Israelitish army had withdrawn, the Canaanites there might have taken possession of the town again; so that, like many other Canaanitish towns, it had to be conquered again after Joshua's death (see the commentary on Num. xxi. 2, 3). There is not much probability in this conjecture, however, for the simple reason that the ban pronounced by Moses upon the country of the king of Arad (Num. xxi. 2) was carried out now for the first time by Judah and Simeon upon the town of Zephath, which formed a part of it. If Joshua had conquered it, he would certainly have executed the ban upon it. The name *Hormah*, which was already given to Zephath in Josh. xv. 30 and xix. 4, is no proof to the contrary, since it may be used proleptically there. In any case, the infliction of the ban upon this town can only be explained from the fact that Moses had pronounced the ban upon all the towns of the king of Arad.—Ver. 18. From the *Negeb* Judah turned into the *shephelah*, and took the three principal cities of the Philistines along the line of coast, viz. Gaza, Askelon, and Ekron, with their territory. The order in which the names of the captured cities occur is a proof that the conquest took place from the south. First of all Gaza, the southernmost of all the towns of the Philistines, the present *Guzzeh;* then

Askelon (*Askulân*), which is five hours to the north of Gaza; and lastly Ekron, the most northerly of the five towns of the Philistines, the present *Akîr* (see at Josh. xiii. 3). The other two, Ashdod and Gath, do not appear to have been conquered at that time. And even those that were conquered, the Judæans were unable to hold long. In the time of Samson they were all of them in the hands of the Philistines again (see chap. xiv. 19, xvi. 1 sqq.; 1 Sam. v. 10, etc.).—In ver. 19 we have a brief summary of the results of the contests for the possession of the land. "*Jehovah was with Judah;*" and with His help they took possession of the mountains. And they did nothing more; "*for the inhabitants of the plain they were unable to exterminate, because they had iron chariots.*" הוֹרִישׁ has two different meanings in the two clauses: first (וַיִּירַשׁ), to seize upon a possession which has been vacated by the expulsion or destruction of its former inhabitants; and secondly (לְהוֹרִישׁ, with the accusative, of the inhabitants), to drive or exterminate them out of their possessions,—a meaning which is derived from the earlier signification of making it an emptied possession (see Ex. xxxiv. 24; Num. xxxii. 21, etc.). "*The mountain*" here includes the south-land (the *Negeb*), as the only distinction is between mountains and plain. "*The valley*" is the *shephelah* (ver. 9). לֹא לְהוֹרִישׁ, he was not (able) to drive out. The construction may be explained from the fact that לֹא is to be taken independently here as in Amos vi. 10, in the same sense in which אֵין before the infinitive is used in later writings (2 Chron. v. 11; Esther iv. 2, viii. 8; Eccl. iii. 14: see *Ges.* § 132–3, anm. 1; *Ewald*, § 237, *e.*). On the iron chariots, *i.e.* the chariots tipped with iron, see at Josh. xvii. 16.—To this there is appended, in ver. 20, the statement that "*they gave Hebron unto Caleb,*" etc., which already occurred in Josh. xv. 13, 14, and was there explained; and also in ver. 21 the remark, that the Benjaminites did not drive out the Jebusites who dwelt in Jerusalem, which is so far in place here, that it shows, on the one hand, that the children of Judah did not bring Jerusalem into the undisputed possession of the Israelites through this conquest, and, on the other hand, that it was not their intention to diminish the inheritance of Benjamin by the conquest of Jerusalem, and they had not taken the city for themselves. For further remarks, see at ver. 8.

The hostile attacks of the other tribes upon the Canaanites who remained in the land are briefly summed up in vers. 22–36. Of these the taking of Bethel is more fully described in vers. 22–26.

Besides this, nothing more is given than the list of the towns in the territories of western Manasseh (vers. 27, 28), Ephraim (ver. 29), Zebulun (ver. 30), Asher (vers. 31, 32), Naphtali (ver. 33), and Dan (vers. 34, 35), out of which the Canaanites were not exterminated by these tribes. Issachar is omitted; hardly, however, because that tribe made no attempt to disturb the Canaanites, as *Bertheau* supposes, but rather because none of its towns remained in the hands of the Canaanites.

Vers. 22–26. Like Judah, so also ("they also," referring back to vers. 2, 3) did the house of Joseph (Ephraim and western Manasseh) renew the hostilities with the Canaanites who were left in their territory after the death of Joshua. The children of Joseph went up against Bethel, and Jehovah was with them, so that they were able to conquer the city. *Bethel* had indeed been assigned to the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 22), but it was situated on the southern boundary of the tribe-land of Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 2, xviii. 13); so that the tribe of Joseph could not tolerate the Canaanites in this border town, if it would defend its own territory against them, and purge it entirely of them. This is a sufficient explanation of the fact that this one conquest is mentioned, and this only, without there being any necessity to seek for the reason, as *Bertheau* does, in the circumstance that the town of Bethel came into such significant prominence in the later history of Israel, and attained the same importance in many respects in relation to the northern tribes, as that which Jerusalem attained in relation to the southern. For the fact that nothing more is said about the other conquests of the children of Joseph, may be explained simply enough on the supposition that they did not succeed in rooting out the Canaanites from the other fortified towns in their possessions; and therefore there was nothing to record about any further conquests, as the result of their hostilities was merely this, that they did not drive the Canaanites out of the towns named in vers. 27, 29, but simply made them tributary. יְתִירוּ, they had it explored, or spied out. תּוּר is construed with ב here, because the spying laid hold, as it were, of its object. *Bethel*, formerly Luz, now *Beitin:* see at Gen. xxviii. 19 and Josh. vii. 2.—Ver. 24. And *the watchmen* (*i.e.* the spies sent out to explore Bethel) saw a man coming out of the town, and got him to show them the entrance into it, under a promise that they would show him favour, *i.e.* would spare the lives of himself and his family (see Josh. ii. 12, 13); whereupon they took the town and smote it without

quarter, according to the law in Deut. xx. 16, 17, letting none but the man and his family go. By "*the entrance into the city*" we are not to understand the gate of the town, but the way or mode by which they could get into the town, which was no doubt fortified. —Ver. 26. The man whom they had permitted to go free, went with his family into the land of the Hittites, and there built a town, to which he gave the name of his earlier abode, viz. *Luz*. The situation of this *Luz* is altogether unknown. Even the situation of the land of the Hittites cannot be more precisely determined; for we find Hittites at Hebron in the times of Abraham and Moses (Gen. xxiii.), and also upon the mountains of Palestine (Num. xiii. 29), and at a later period in the north-east of Canaan on the borders of Syria (1 Kings x. 29). That the Hittites were one of the most numerous and widespread of the tribes of the Canaanites, is evident from the fact that, in Josh. i. 4, the Canaanites generally are described as Hittites.

Vers. 27, 28. Manasseh did not root out the Canaanites from the towns which had been allotted to it in the territory of Asher and Issachar (Josh. xvii. 11), but simply made them tributary. לֹא הוֹרִישׁ אֶת־בֵּית־שְׁאָן וגו׳, considered by itself, might be rendered: "*Manasseh did not take possession of Bethshean*," etc. But as we find, in the further enumeration, the inhabitants of the towns mentioned instead of the towns themselves, we must take הוֹרִישׁ in the sense of rooting out, driving out of their possessions, which is the only rendering applicable in ver. 28; and thus, according to a very frequent metonymy, must understand by the towns the inhabitants of the towns. "*Manasseh did not exterminate Bethshean*," *i.e.* the inhabitants of Bethshean, etc. All the towns mentioned here have already been mentioned in Josh. xvii. 11, the only difference being, that they are not placed in exactly the same order, and that *Endor* is mentioned there after *Dor;* whereas here it has no doubt fallen out through a copyist's error, as the Manassites, according to Josh. xvii. 12, 13, did not exterminate the Canaanites from all the towns mentioned there. The change in the order in which the towns occur—Taanach being placed next to Bethshean, whereas in Joshua Bethshean is followed by Ibleam, which is placed last but one in the present list—may be explained on the supposition, that in Josh. xvii. 11, Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo are placed together, as forming a triple league, of which the author of our book has taken no notice. Nearly all these towns were in the plain of Jezreel, or in the immediate neighbourhood of the great com-

mercial roads which ran from the coast of the Mediterranean to Damascus and central Asia. The Canaanites no doubt brought all their strength to bear upon the defence of these roads; and in this their war-chariots, against which Israel could do nothing in the plain of Jezreel, were of the greatest service (see ver. 19; Josh. xvii. 16). For further particulars respecting the situation of the different towns, see at Josh. xvii. 11. *Dor* only was on the coast of the Mediterranean (see at Josh. xi. 2), and being a commercial emporium of the Phœnicians, would certainly be strongly fortified, and very difficult to conquer.—Ver. 28. As the Israelites grew strong, they made serfs of the Canaanites (see at Gen. xlix. 15). When this took place is not stated; but at all events, it was only done gradually in the course of the epoch of the judges, and not for the first time during the reign of Solomon, as *Bertheau* supposes on the ground of 1 Kings ix. 20–22 and iv. 12, without considering that even in the time of David the Israelites had already attained the highest power they ever possessed, and that there is nothing at variance with this in 1 Kings iv. 12 and ix. 20–22. For it by no means follows, from the appointment of a prefect by Solomon over the districts of Taanach, Megiddo, and Bethshean (1 Kings iv. 12), that these districts had only been conquered by Solomon a short time before, when we bear in mind that Solomon appointed twelve such prefects over all Israel, to remit in regular order the national payments that were required for the maintenance of the regal court. Nor does it follow, that because Solomon employed the descendants of the Canaanites who were left in the land as tributary labourers in the erection of his great buildings, therefore he was the first who succeeded in compelling those Canaanites who were not exterminated when the land was conquered by Joshua, to pay tribute to the different tribes of Israel.

Vers. 29–35. Ephraim did not root out the Canaanites in *Gezer* (ver. 29), as has already been stated in Josh. xvi. 10.—Ver. 30. Zebulun did not root out the Canaanites in *Kitron* and *Nahalol*. Neither of these places has been discovered (see at Josh. xix. 15). —Ver. 31. Asher did not root out those in *Acco*, etc. *Acco:* a seaport town to the north of Carmel, on the bay which is called by its name; it is called *Ake* by *Josephus*, *Diod. Sic.*, and *Pliny*, and was afterwards named *Ptolemais* from one of the Ptolemys (1 Macc. v. 15, 21, x. 1, etc.; Acts xxi. 7). The Arabs called it *Akka*, and this was corrupted by the crusaders into *Acker* or *Acre*. During the crusades it was a very flourishing maritime and commercial

town; but it subsequently fell into decay, and at the present time has a population of about 5000, composed of Mussulmans, Druses, and Christians (see *C. v. Raumer*, Pal. p. 119; *Rob.* Bibl. Res.; and *Ritter*, Erdk. xvi. pp. 725 sqq.). *Sidon*, now *Saida:* see at Josh. xi. 8. *Achlab* is only mentioned here, and is not known. *Achzib, i.e. Ecdippa:* see at Josh. xix. 29. *Helbah* is unknown. *Aphek* is the present *Afkah:* see Josh. xiii. 4, xix. 30. *Rehob* is unknown: see at Josh. xix. 28, 30. As seven out of the twenty-two towns of Asher (Josh. xix. 30) remained in the hands of the Canaanites, including such important places as Acco and Sidon, it is not stated in ver. 32, as in vers. 29, 30, that "the Canaanites dwelt among them," but that "*the Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites*," to show that the Canaanites held the upper hand. And for this reason the expression "they became tributaries" (vers. 30, 35, etc.) is also omitted.—Ver. 33. Naphtali did not root out the inhabitants of *Beth-shemesh* and *Beth-anath*, two fortified towns, the situation of which is still unknown (see at Josh. xix. 38); so that this tribe also dwelt among the Canaanites, but did not make them tributary.—Vers. 34, 35. Still less were the Danites able to drive the Canaanites out of their inheritance. On the contrary, the Amorites forced Dan up into the mountains, and would not suffer them to come down into the plain. But the territory allotted to the Danites was almost all in the plain (see at Josh. xix. 40). If, therefore, they were forced out of that, they were almost entirely excluded from their inheritance. The Amorites emboldened themselves (see at Deut. i. 5) to dwell in *Har-cheres*, *Ajalon*, and *Shaalbim*. On the last two places see Josh. xix. 42, where *Ir-shemesh* is also mentioned. This combination, and still more the meaning of the names *Har-cheres, i.e.* sun-mountain, and *Ir-shemesh, i.e.* sun-town, make the conjecture a very probable one, that *Har-cheres* is only another name for *Ir-shemesh, i.e.* the present *Ain Shems* (see at Josh. xv. 10, and *Rob.* Pal. iii. pp. 17, 18). This pressure on the part of the Amorites induced a portion of the Danites to emigrate, and seek for an inheritance in the north of Palestine (see chap. xviii.). On the other hand, the Amorites were gradually made tributary by the powerful tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh, who bounded Dan on the north. "*The hand of the house of Joseph lay heavy*," *sc.* upon the Amorites in the towns already named on the borders of Ephraim. For the expression itself, comp. 1 Sam. v. 6; Ps. xxxii. 4.

Ver. 36. In order to explain the supremacy of the Amorites in

the territory of Dan, a short notice is added concerning their extension in the south of Palestine. "*The territory of the Amorites was*," *i.e.* extended (viz. at the time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites), "*from the ascent of Akrabbim, from the rock onwards and farther up.*" *Maaleh-Akrabbim* (*ascensus scorpiorum*) was the sharply projecting line of cliffs which intersected the Ghor below the Dead Sea, and formed the southern boundary of the promised land (see at Num. xxxiv. 4 and Josh. xv. 2, 3). מֵהַסֶּלַע, from the rock, is no doubt given as a second point upon the boundary of the Amoritish territory, as the repetition of the מִן clearly shows, notwithstanding the omission of the copula וְ. הַסֶּלַע, the rock, is supposed by the majority of commentators to refer to the city of *Petra*, the ruins of which are still to be seen in the *Wady Musa* (see *Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 703 sqq.; *Rob.* Pal. ii. pp. 573 sqq., iii. 653), and which is distinctly mentioned in 2 Kings xiv. 7 under the name of הַסֶּלַע, and in Isa. xvi. 1 is called simply סֶלַע. Petra is to the south-east of the Scorpion heights. Consequently, with this rendering the following word וּמָעְלָה (and upward) would have to be taken in the sense of *ulterius* (and beyond), and *Rosenmüller's* explanation would be the correct one: "The Amorites not only extended as far as the town of Petra, or inhabited it, but they even carried their dwellings beyond this towards the tops of those southern mountains." But a description of the territory of the Amorites in its southern extension into Arabia Petræa does not suit the context of the verse, the object of which is to explain how it was that the Amorites were in a condition to force back the Danites out of the plain into the mountains, to say nothing of the fact that it is questionable whether the Amorites ever really spread so far, for which we have neither scriptural testimony nor evidence of any other kind. On this ground even *Bertheau* has taken וּמָעְלָה as denoting the direction upwards, *i.e.* towards the north, which unquestionably suits the usage of מַעֲלָה as well as the context of the passage. But it is by no means in harmony with this to understand הַסֶּלַע as referring to *Petra;* for in that case we should have two boundary points mentioned, the second of which was farther south than the first. Now a historian who had any acquaintance with the topography, would never have described the extent of the Amoritish territory from south to north in such a way as this, commencing with the Scorpion heights on the north, then passing to Petra, which was farther south, and stating that from this point the territory extended farther towards the north. If וּמָעְלָה therefore refers to the exten-

sion of the territory of the Amorites in a northerly direction, the expression "from the rock" cannot be understood as relating to the city of Petra, but must denote some other locality well known to the Israelites by that name. Such a locality there undoubtedly was in the rock in the desert of Zin, which had become celebrated through the events that took place at the water of strife (Num. xx. 8, 10), and to which in all probability this expression refers. The rock in question was at the south-west corner of Canaan, on the southern edge of the *Rakhma* plateau, to which the mountains of the Amorites extended on the south-west (comp. Num. xiv. 25, 44, 45, with Deut. i. 44). And this would be very appropriately mentioned here as the south-western boundary of the Amorites, in connection with the Scorpion heights as their south-eastern boundary, for the purpose of giving the southern boundary of the Amorites in its full extent from east to west.

Chap. ii. 1–5. *The Angel of the Lord at Bochim.*—To the cursory survey of the attitude which the tribes of Israel assumed towards the Canaanites who still remained in their inheritances, there is appended an account of the appearance of the angel of the Lord, who announced to the people the punishment of God for their breach of the covenant, of which they had been guilty through their failure to exterminate the Canaanites. This theophany is most intimately connected with the facts grouped together in chap. i., since the design and significance of the historical survey given there are only to be learned from the reproof of the angel; and since both of them have the same aphoristic character, being restricted to the essential facts without entering minutely into any of the attendant details, very much is left in obscurity. This applies more particularly to the statement in ver. 1*a*, "*Then the angel of Jehovah came up from Gilgal to Bochim.*" The "angel of Jehovah" is not a prophet, or some other earthly messenger of Jehovah, either Phinehas or Joshua, as the *Targums*, the *Rabbins*, *Bertheau*, and others assume, but the angel of the Lord who is of one essence with God. In the simple historical narrative a prophet is never called *Maleach Jehovah*. The prophets are always called either נָבִיא or אִישׁ נָבִיא, as in chap. vi. 8, or else "man of God," as in 1 Kings xii. 22, xiii. 1, etc.; and Hag. i. 13 and Mal. iii. 1 cannot be adduced as proofs to the contrary, because in both these passages the purely appellative meaning of the word *Maleach* is established beyond all question by the context itself. Moreover, no prophet ever identifies himself so entirely with God as the angel of Jehovah

does here. The prophets always distinguish between themselves and Jehovah, by introducing their words with the declaration "Thus saith Jehovah," as the prophet mentioned in chap. vi. 8 is said to have done. On the other hand, it is affirmed that no angel mentioned in the historical books is ever said to have addressed the whole nation, or to have passed from one place to another. But even if it had been a prophet who was speaking, we could not possibly understand his speaking to the whole nation, or "to all the children of Israel," as signifying that he spoke directly to the 600,000 men of Israel, but simply as an address delivered to the whole nation in the persons of its heads or representatives. Thus Joshua spoke to "all the people" (Josh. xxiv. 2), though only the elders of Israel and its heads were assembled round him (Josh. xxiv. 1). And so an angel, or "the angel of the Lord," might also speak to the heads of the nation, when his message had reference to all the people. And there was nothing in the fact of his coming up from Gilgal to Bochim that was at all at variance with the nature of the angel. When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, it is stated in chap. vi. 11 that he came and sat under the terebinth at Ophra; and in the same way the appearance of the angel of the Lord at Bochim might just as naturally be described as coming up to Bochim. The only thing that strikes us as peculiar is his coming up "from Gilgal." This statement must be intimately connected with the mission of the angel, and therefore must contain something more than a simply literal notice concerning his travelling from one place to another. We are not to conclude, however, that the angel of the Lord came from Gilgal, because this town was the gathering-place of the congregation in Joshua's time. Apart altogether from the question discussed in pp. 92 sqq. as to the situation of Gilgal in the different passages of the book of Joshua, such a view as this is overthrown by the circumstance that after the erection of the tabernacle at Shiloh, and during the division of the land, it was not Gilgal but Shiloh which formed the gathering-place of the congregation when the casting of the lots was finished (Josh. xviii. 1, 10). We cannot agree with *H. Witsius*, therefore, who says in his *Miscell. ss.* (i. p. 170, ed. 1736) that "he came from that place, where he had remained for a long time to guard the camp, and where he was thought to be tarrying still;" but must rather assume that his coming up from Gilgal is closely connected with the appearance of the angel-prince, as described in Josh. v. 13, to announce to Joshua the fall of Jericho after the circumcision of

the people at Gilgal. Just as on that occasion, when Israel had just entered into the true covenant relation to the Lord by circumcision, and was preparing for the conquest of Canaan, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joshua as the prince of the army of Jehovah, to ensure him of the taking of Jericho; so here after the entrance of the tribes of Israel into their inheritances, when they were beginning to make peace with the remaining Canaanites, and instead of rooting them out were content to make them tributary, the angel of the Lord appeared to the people, to make known to all the children of Israel that by such intercourse with the Canaanites they had broken the covenant of the Lord, and to foretell the punishment which would follow this transgression of the covenant. By the fact, therefore, that he came up from Gilgal, it is distinctly shown that the same angel who gave the whole of Canaan into the hands of the Israelites when Jericho fell, had appeared to them again at Bochim, to make known to them the purposes of God in consequence of their disobedience to the commands of the Lord. How very far it was from being the author's intention to give simply a geographical notice, is also evident from the fact that he merely describes the place where this appearance occurred by the name which was given to it in consequence of the event, viz. *Bochim, i.e.* weepers. The situation of this place is altogether unknown. The rendering of the LXX., ἐπὶ τὸν Κλαυθμῶνα καὶ ἐπὶ Βαιθὴλ καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον Ἰσραήλ, gives no clue whatever; for τὸν Κλαυθμῶνα merely arises from a confusion of בֹּכִים with בָּכְאִים in 2 Sam. v. 23, which the LXX. have also rendered Κλαυθμών, and ἐπὶ τὸν Βαιθὴλ κ.τ.λ. is an arbitrary interpolation of the translators themselves, who supposed *Bochim* to be in the neighbourhood of Bethel, "in all probability merely because they thought of *Allon-bachuth*, the oak of weeping, at Bethel, which is mentioned in Gen. xxxv. 8" (*Bertheau*). With regard to the *piska* in the middle of the verse, see the remarks on Josh. iv. 1. In his address the angel of the Lord identifies himself with Jehovah (as in Josh. v. 14 compared with vi. 2), by describing himself as having made them to go up out of Egypt and brought them into the land which He sware unto their fathers. There is something very striking in the use of the imperfect אַעֲלֶה in the place of the perfect (cf. chap. vi. 8), as the substance of the address and the continuation of it in the historical tense וָאָבִיא and וָאֹמַר require the preterite. The imperfect is only to be explained on the supposition that it is occasioned by the *imperf. consec.* which follows immediately afterwards and reacts through its proximity. "*I will*

*not break my covenant for ever*," *i.e.* will keep what I promised when making the covenant, viz. that I would endow Israel with blessings and salvation, if they for their part would observe the covenant duties into which they had entered (see Ex. xix. 5 sqq.), and obey the commandments of the Lord. Among these was the commandment to enter into no alliance with the inhabitants of that land, viz. the Canaanites (see Ex. xxiii. 32, 33, xxxiv. 12, 13, 15, 16; Deut. vii. 2 sqq.; Josh. xxiii. 12). "*Destroy their altars:*" taken verbatim from Ex. xxxiv. 13, Deut. vii. 5. The words "*and ye have not hearkened to my voice*" recall to mind Ex. xix. 5. "*What have ye done*" (מַה־זֹּאת, literally "what is this that ye have done") *sc.* in sparing the Canaanites and tolerating their altars?—Ver. 3. "*And I also have said to you:*" these words point to the threat already expressed in Num. xxxiii. 55, Josh. xxiii. 13, in the event of their not fulfilling the command of God, which threat the Lord would now fulfil. From the passages mentioned, we may also explain the expression וְהָיוּ לָכֶם לְצִדִּים, they shall be in your sides, *i.e.* thorns in your sides. לְצִדִּים is an abbreviated expression for לְצִנִּים בְּצִדֵּיכֶם in Num. xxxiii. 55, so that there is no necessity for the conjecture that it stands for לְצָרִים. The last clause of ver. 3 is formed after Ex. xxiii. 33.—Vers. 4, 5. The people broke out into loud weeping on account of this reproof. And since the weeping, from which the place received the name of *Bochim*, was a sign of their grief on account of their sin, this grief led on to such repentance that "*they sacrificed there unto the Lord*," no doubt presenting sin-offerings and burnt-offerings, that they might obtain mercy and the forgiveness of their sins. It does not follow from this sacrifice, however, that the tabernacle or the ark of the covenant was to be found at Bochim. In any place where the Lord appeared to His people, sacrifices might be offered to Him (see chap. vi. 20, 26, 28, xiii. 16 sqq.; 2 Sam. xxiv. 25, and the commentary on Deut. xii. 5). On the other hand, it does follow from the sacrifice at Bochim, where there was no sanctuary of Jehovah, that the person who appeared to the people was not a prophet, nor even an ordinary angel, but *the angel of the Lord*, who is essentially one with Jehovah.

CONDUCT OF ISRAEL TOWARDS THE LORD, AND TREATMENT OF ISRAEL BY THE LORD, IN THE TIME OF THE JUDGES.—CHAP. II. 6–III. 6.

The attitude which the Israelites assumed towards the Canaanites who were left in their possessions, contained the germ of the peculiar direction given to the development of the nation of God in the times of the judges. To exhibit the course of this development in its most general principles, the age which commenced after Joshua's death is characterized as a period of constant alternation between idolatry and consequent subjugation by foreign nations as a punishment from God for the transgression of His covenant on the one hand, and return to God after receiving chastisement and consequent deliverance by judges expressly raised up by God for that purpose on the other. In this way the righteousness of the holy God is displayed so clearly in the punishment of the rebellious, and the mercy of the faithful covenant God in His forgiveness of the penitent, that the history of Israel at that time exhibits to us an example of the divine holiness and righteousness on the one hand, and of His grace and mercy on the other, as displayed in the church of God of all times, as a warning for the ungodly and for the consolation of the righteous.

Vers. 6–10. The account of this development of the covenant nation, which commenced after the death of Joshua and his contemporaries, is attached to the book of Joshua by a simple repetition of the closing verses of that book (Josh. xxiv. 28–31) in vers. 6–10, with a few unimportant differences, not only to form a link between Josh. xxiv. and Judg. ii. 11, and to resume the thread of the history which was broken off by the summary just given of the results of the wars between the Israelites and Canaanites (*Bertheau*), but rather to bring out sharply and clearly the contrast between the age that was past and the period of the Israelitish history that was just about to commence. The *vav consec.* attached to וַיְשַׁלַּח expresses the order of thought and not of time. The apostasy of the new generation from the Lord (vers. 10 sqq.) was a necessary consequence of the attitude of Israel to the Canaanites who were left in the land, as described in chap. i. 1–ii. 5. This thought is indicated by the *vav consec.* in וַיְשַׁלַּח; so that the meaning of vers. 6 sqq. as expressed in our ordinary phraseology would be as follows: Now when Joshua had dismissed the people, and the children of Israel had gone every one to his own inheritance to take

possession of the land, the people served the Lord as long as Joshua and the elders who survived him were alive; but when Joshua was dead, and that generation (which was contemporaneous with him) had been gathered to its fathers, there rose up another generation after them which knew not the Lord, and also (knew not) the work which He had done to Israel. On the death and burial of Joshua, see at Josh. xxiv. 29, 30. "*Gathered unto their fathers*" corresponds to "gathered to his people" in the Pentateuch (Gen. xxv. 8, 17, xxxv. 29, xlix. 29, 33, etc.: see at Gen. xxv. 8). They "*knew not the Lord*," *sc.* from seeing or experiencing His wonderful deeds, which the contemporaries of Joshua and Moses had seen and experienced.

In the general survey of the times of the judges, commencing at ver. 11, the falling away of the Israelites from the Lord is mentioned first of all, and at the same time it is distinctly shown how neither the chastisements inflicted upon them by God at the hands of hostile nations, nor the sending of judges to set them free from the hostile oppression, availed to turn them from their idolatry (vers. 11–19). This is followed by the determination of God to tempt and chastise the sinful nation by not driving away the remaining Canaanites (vers. 20–23); and lastly, the account concludes with an enumeration of the tribes that still remained, and the attitude of Israel towards them (chap. iii. 1–6).

Vers. 11–19. *Repeated falling away of the People from the Lord.* —Vers. 11–13. The Israelites did what was evil in the eyes of the Lord (what was displeasing to the Lord); they served *Baalim*. The plural *Baalim* is a general term employed to denote all false deities, and is synonymous with the expression "other gods" in the clause "other gods of the gods of the nations round about them" (the Israelites). This use of the term *Baalim* arose from the fact that Baal was the chief male deity of the Canaanites and all the nations of Hither Asia, and was simply worshipped by the different nations with peculiar modifications, and therefore designated by various distinctive epithets. In ver. 12 this apostasy is more minutely described as forsaking Jehovah the God of their fathers, to whom they were indebted for the greatest blessing, viz. their deliverance out of Egypt, and following other gods of the heathen nations that were round about them (taken *verbatim* from Deut. vi. 14, and xiii. 7, 8), and worshipping them. In this way they provoked the Lord to anger (cf. Deut. iv. 25, ix. 18, etc.).—Ver. 13. Thus they forsook Jehovah, and served Baal and the Asthartes. In

this case the singular *Baal* is connected with the plural *Ashtaroth*, because the male deities of all the Canaanitish nations, and those that bordered upon Canaan, were in their nature one and the same deity, viz. *Baal*, a sun-god, and as such the vehicle and source of physical life, and of the generative and reproductive power of nature, which was regarded as an effluence from its own being (see *Movers*, Relig. der Phönizier, pp. 184 sqq., and *J. G. Müller* in Herzog's Cyclopædia). *Ashtaroth*, from the singular *Ashtoreth*, which only occurs again in 1 Kings xi. 5, 33, and 2 Kings xxiii. 13, in connection with the Sidonian Astharte, was the general name used to denote the leading female deity of the Canaanitish tribes, a moon-goddess, who was worshipped as the feminine principle of nature embodied in the pure moon-light, and its influence upon terrestrial life. It corresponded to the Greek *Aphrodite*, whose celebrated temple at Askalon is described in *Herod.* i. 105. In chap. iii. 7, *Asheroth* is used as equivalent to *Ashtaroth*, which is used here, chap. x. 6; 1 Sam. vii. 4, xii. 10. The name *Asheroth*[1] was transferred to the deity itself from the idols of this goddess, which generally consisted of wooden columns, and are called *Asherim* in Ex. xxxiv. 13, Deut. vii. 5, xii. 3, xvi. 21. On the other hand, the word *Ashtoreth* is without any traceable etymology in the Semitic dialects, and was probably derived from Upper Asia, being connected with a Persian word signifying a star, and synonymous with *Ἀστροάρχη*, the star-queen of Sabæism (see *Ges.* Thes. pp. 1083–4; *Movers*, p. 606; and *Müller*, *ut sup.*).

With regard to the nature of the Baal and Astharte worship, into which the Israelites fell not long after the death of Joshua, and in which they continued henceforth to sink deeper and deeper, it is evident from the more precise allusions contained in the history of Gideon, that it did not consist of direct opposition to the worship of Jehovah, or involve any formal rejection of Jehovah, but that it was simply an admixture of the worship of Jehovah with the heathen or Canaanitish nature-worship. Not only was the ephod which Gideon caused to be made in his native town of Ophrah, and after which all Israel went a whoring (chap. viii. 27), an imitation of the high priest's ephod in the worship of Jehovah; but the worship of Baal-berith at Shechem, after which the Israelites went a whoring again when Gideon was dead (chap. viii. 33), was simply a corruption of the worship of Jehovah, in which Baal was put in the place of Jehovah and worshipped in a similar way,

[1] Rendered *groves* in the English version.—Tr.

as we may clearly see from chap. ix. 27. The worship of Jehovah could even be outwardly continued in connection with this idolatrous worship. Just as in the case of these nations in the midst of which the Israelites lived, the mutual recognition of their different deities and religions was manifested in the fact that they all called their supreme deity by the same name, *Baal*, and simply adopted some other epithet by which to define the distinctive peculiarities of each; so the Israelites also imagined that they could worship the Baals of the powerful nations round about them along with Jehovah their covenant God, especially if they worshipped them in the same manner as their covenant God. This will serve to explain the rapid and constantly repeated falling away of the Israelites from Jehovah into Baal-worship, at the very time when the worship of Jehovah was stedfastly continued at the tabernacle in accordance with the commands of the law. The Israelites simply followed the lead and example of their heathen neighbours. Just as the heathen were tolerant with regard to the recognition of the deities of other nations, and did not refuse to extend this recognition even to Jehovah the God of Israel, so the Israelites were also tolerant towards the Baals of the neighbouring nations, whose sensuous nature-worship was more grateful to the corrupt heart of man than the spiritual Jehovah-religion, with its solemn demands for sanctification of life. But this syncretism, which was not only reconcilable with polytheism, but actually rooted in its very nature, was altogether irreconcilable with the nature of true religion. For if Jehovah is the only true God, and there are no other gods besides or beside Him, then the purity and holiness of His nature is not only disturbed, but altogether distorted, by any admixture of His worship with the worship of idols or of the objects of nature, the true God being turned into an idol, and Jehovah degraded into Baal. Looking closely into the matter, therefore, the mixture of the Canaanitish worship of Baal with the worship of Jehovah was actually forsaking Jehovah and serving other gods, as the prophetic author of this book pronounces it. It was just the same with the worship of Baal in the kingdom of the ten tribes, which was condemned by the prophets Hosea and Amos (see *Hengstenberg*, Christology, i. pp. 168 sqq., Eng. trans.).—Vers. 14, 15. On account of this idolatrous worship, the anger of the Lord burned against Israel, so that He gave them up into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and sold them into the hands of their enemies. שֹׁסִים from שָׁסָה, alternated with שָׁסַס in יִשְׁסוּ, to plunder. This word

is not met with in the Pentateuch, whereas מָכַר, to sell, occurs in Deut. xxxii. 30, in the sense of giving helplessly up to the foe. "*They could no longer stand before their enemies,*" as they had done under Joshua, and in fact as long as Israel continued faithful to the Lord; so that now, instead of the promise contained in Lev. xxvi. 7, 8, being fulfilled, the threat contained in Lev. xxvi. 17 was carried into execution. "*Whithersoever they went out,*" *i.e.* in every expedition, every attack that they made upon their enemies, "*the hand of Jehovah was against them for evil, as He had said*" (Lev. xxvi. 17, 36; Deut. xxviii. 25), and "*had sworn unto them.*" There is no express oath mentioned either in Lev. xxvi. or Deut. xxviii.; it is implied therefore in the nature of the case, or *in virtute verborum*, as *Seb. Schmidt* affirms, inasmuch as the threats themselves were words of the true and holy God. וַיֵּצַר לָהֶם מְאֹד, "*and it became to them very narrow,*" *i.e.* they came into great straits.—Vers. 16, 17. But the Lord did not rest content with this. He did still more. "*He raised up judges who delivered them out of the hand of their plunderers,*" to excite them to love in return by this manifestation of His love and mercy, and to induce them to repent. But "*they did not hearken even to their judges,*" namely, so as not to fall back again into idolatry, which the judge had endeavoured to suppress. This limitation of the words is supported by the context, viz. by a comparison of vers. 18, 19.—"*But* (כִּי after a negative clause) *they went a whoring after other gods* (for the application of this expression to the spiritual adultery of idolatrous worship, see Ex. xxxiv. 15), *and turned quickly away* (*vid.* Ex. xxxii. 8) *from the way which their fathers walked in, to hearken to the commandments of the Lord,*" *i.e.* from the way of obedience to the divine commands. "*They did not so*" (or what was right) *sc.* as their fathers under Joshua had done (cf. ver. 7).—Vers. 18, 19. "*And when the Lord raised them up judges, and was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge* (*i.e.* as long as the judge was living), *because the Lord had compassion upon their sighing, by reason of them that oppressed them, and vexed them* (דָּחַק only occurs again as a verb in Joel ii. 8): *it came to pass when the judge was dead, that they returned and acted more corruptly than their fathers,*" *i.e.* they turned again to idolatry even more grievously than their fathers had done under the previous judges. "*They did not let fall from their deeds,*" *i.e.* they did not cease from their evil deeds, and "*from their stiff-necked way.*" קָשָׁה, hard, is to be understood as in Ex. xxxii. 9 and

xxxiii. 3, where Israel is called a hard-necked people which did not bend under obedience to the commandments of God.

Vers. 20–23. *Chastisement of the rebellious Nation.*—Vers. 20, 21. On account of this idolatry, which was not only constantly repeated, but continued to grow worse and worse, the anger of the Lord burned so fiercely against Israel, that He determined to destroy no more of the nations which Joshua had left when he died, before the people that had broken His covenant. In order to set forth this divine purpose most distinctly, it is thrown into the form of a sentence uttered by God through the expression וַיֹּאמֶר וגו׳. The Lord said, "Because this people has transgressed my covenant, . . . I also will no longer keep my covenant promise (Ex. xxiii. 23, 27 sqq., xxxiv. 10 sqq.), and will no more drive out any of the remaining Canaanites before them" (see Josh. xxiii. 13).—Ver. 22. The purpose of God in this resolution was "*to prove Israel through them* (the tribes that were not exterminated), *whether they* (the Israelites) *would keep the way of the Lord to walk therein* (cf. Deut. viii. 2), *as their fathers did keep it, or not.*" לְמַעַן נַסּוֹת is not dependent upon the verb עָזַב, as *Studer* supposes, which yields no fitting sense; nor can the clause be separated from the preceding one, as *Bertheau* suggests, and connected as a protasis with ver. 23 (this would be a thoroughly unnatural construction, for which Isa. xlv. 4 does not furnish any true parallel); but the clause is attached in the simplest possible manner to the main thought in vers. 20, 21, that is to say, to the words "*and He said*" in ver. 20: Jehovah said, *i.e.* resolved, that He would not exterminate the remaining nations any further, to tempt Israel through them. The plural בָּם, in the place of the singular בָּהּ, which the foregoing דֶּרֶךְ requires, is to be regarded as a *constructio ad sensum*, *i.e.* to be attributed to the fact, that keeping the way of God really consists in observing the commandments of God, and that this was the thought which floated before the writer's mind. The thought expressed in this verse, that Jehovah would not exterminate the Canaanites before Israel any more, to try them whether they would keep His commandments, just as He had previously caused the people whom He brought out of Egypt to wander in the wilderness for forty years with the very same intention (Deut. viii. 2), is not at variance with the design of God, expressed in Ex. xxiii. 29, 30, and Deut. vii. 22, not to exterminate the Canaanites all at once, lest the land should become waste, and the wild beasts multiply therein, nor yet with the motive assigned in chap. iii. 1, 2. For the determination not

to exterminate the Canaanites in one single year, was a different thing from the purpose of God to suspend their gradual extermination altogether. The former purpose had immediate regard to the well-being of Israel; the latter, on the contrary, was primarily intended as a chastisement for its transgression of the covenant, although even this chastisement was intended to lead the rebellious nation to repentance, and promote its prosperity by a true conversion to the Lord. And the motive assigned in chap. ii. 2 is in perfect harmony with this intention, as our explanation of this passage will clearly show.—Ver. 23. In consequence of this resolution, the Lord let these tribes (those mentioned in chap. iii. 3) remain at rest, *i.e.* quietly, in the land, without exterminating them rapidly. The expression מַהֵר, hastily, quickly, *i.e.* according to the distinct words of the following clause, through and under Joshua, appears strange after what has gone before. For what is threatened in ver. 21 is not the suspension of rapid extermination, but of any further extermination. This threat, therefore, is so far limited by the word "hastily," as to signify that the Lord would not exterminate any more of these nations so long as Israel persisted in its idolatry. But as soon as and whenever Israel returned to the Lord its God in true repentance, to keep His covenant, the Lord would recall His threat, and let the promised extermination of the Canaanites go forward again. Had Israel not forsaken the Lord its God so soon after Joshua's death, the Lord would have exterminated the Canaanites who were left in the land much sooner than He did, or have carried out their gradual extermination in a much shorter time than was actually the case, in consequence of the continual idolatry of the people.

Chap. iii. 1–6. *Nations which the Lord left in Canaan:* with a repetition of the reason why this was done.—Ver. 1. The reason, which has already been stated in chap. ii. 22, viz. "to prove Israel by them," is still further elucidated here. In the first place (ver. 1), אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל is more precisely defined as signifying "*all those who had not known all the wars of Canaan*," *sc.* from their own observation and experience, that is to say, the generation of the Israelites which rose up after the death of Joshua. For "*the wars of Canaan*" were the wars which were carried on by Joshua with the almighty help of the Lord for the conquest of Canaan. The whole thought is then still further expanded in ver. 2 as follows: "*only* (for no other purpose than) *that the succeeding generations* (the generations which followed Joshua and his contemporaries) *of the children of Israel*,

*that He* (Jehovah) *might teach them war, only those who had not known them* (the wars of Canaan)." The suffix attached to יְדָעִם refers to " the wars of Canaan," although this is a feminine noun, the suffix in the masculine plural being frequently used in connection with a feminine noun. At first sight it would appear as though the reason given here for the non-extermination of the Canaanites was not in harmony with the reason assigned in chap. ii. 22, which is repeated in ver. 4 of the present chapter. But the differences are perfectly reconcilable, if we only give a correct explanation of the two expressions, " learning war," and the " wars of Canaan." Learning war in the context before us is equivalent to learning to make war upon the nations of Canaan. Joshua and the Israelites of his time had not overcome these nations by their own human power or by earthly weapons, but by the miraculous help of their God, who had smitten and destroyed the Canaanites before the Israelites. The omnipotent help of the Lord, however, was only granted to Joshua and the whole nation, on condition that they adhered firmly to the law of God (Josh. i. 7), and faithfully observed the covenant of the Lord; whilst the transgression of that covenant, even by Achan, caused the defeat of Israel before the Canaanites (Josh. vii.). In the wars of Canaan under Joshua, therefore, Israel had experienced and learned, that the power to conquer its foes did not consist in the multitude and bravery of its own fighting men, but solely in the might of its God, which it could only possess so long as it continued faithful to the Lord. This lesson the generations that followed Joshua had forgotten, and consequently they did not understand how to make war. To impress this truth upon them,—the great truth, upon which the very existence as well as the prosperity of Israel, and its attainment of the object of its divine calling, depended; in other words, to teach it by experience, that the people of Jehovah could only fight and conquer in the power of its God,—the Lord had left the Canaanites in the land. Necessity teaches a man to pray. The distress into which the Israelites were brought by the remaining Canaanites was a chastisement from God, through which the Lord desired to lead back the rebellious to himself, to keep them obedient to His commandments, and to train them to the fulfilment of their covenant duties. In this respect, learning war, *i.e.* learning how the congregation of the Lord was to fight against the enemies of God and of His kingdom, was one of the means appointed by God to tempt Israel, or prove whether it would listen to the commandments of

God (ver. 4), or would walk in the ways of the Lord. If Israel should so learn to war, it would learn at the same time to keep the commandments of God. But both of these were necessary for the people of God. For just as the realization of the blessings promised to the nation in the covenant depended upon its hearkening to the voice of the Lord, so the conflicts appointed for it were also necessary, just as much for the purification of the sinful nation, as for the perpetuation and growth of the kingdom of God upon the earth.—Ver. 3. The enumeration of the different nations rests upon Josh. xiii. 2–6, and, with its conciseness and brevity, is only fully intelligible through the light thrown upon it by that passage. The five princes of the Philistines are mentioned singly there. According to Josh. xiii. 4 sqq., "*all the Canaanites and the Sidonians and the Hivites*," are the Canaanitish tribes dwelling in northern Canaan, by the Phœnician coast and upon Mount Lebanon. "*The Canaanites:*" viz. those who dwelt along the sea-coast to the south of Sidon. *The Hivites:* those who were settled more in the heart of the country, "from the mountains of Baal-hermon up to the territory of Hamath." *Baal-hermon* is only another name for *Baal-gad*, the present *Banjas*, under the Hermon (cf. Josh. xiii. 5). When it is stated still further in ver. 4, that "they were left in existence (*i.e.* were not exterminated by Joshua) to prove Israel by them," we are struck with the fact, that besides the Philistines, only these northern Canaanites are mentioned; whereas, according to chap. i., many towns in the centre of the land were also left in the hands of the Canaanites, and therefore here also the Canaanites were not yet exterminated, and became likewise a snare to the Israelites, not only according to the word of the angel of the Lord (chap. ii. 3), but also because the Israelites who dwelt among these Canaanitish tribes contracted marriages with them, and served their gods. This striking circumstance cannot be set aside, as *Bertheau* supposes, by the simple remark, that "the two lists (that of the countries which the tribes of Israel did not conquer after Joshua's death in chap. i., and the one given here of the nations which Joshua had not subjugated) must correspond on the whole," since the correspondence referred to really does not exist. It can only be explained on the ground that the Canaanites who were left in the different towns in the midst of the land, acquired all their power to maintain their stand against Israel from the simple fact that the Philistines on the south-west, and several whole tribes of Canaanites in the north, had been left by Joshua neither exterminated nor

even conquered, inasmuch as they so crippled the power of the Israelites by wars and invasions of the Israelitish territory, that they were unable to exterminate those who remained in the different fortresses of their own possessions. Because, therefore, the power to resist the Israelites and oppress them for a time resided not so much in the Canaanites who were dwelling in the midst of Israel, as in the Philistines and the Canaanites upon the mountains of Lebanon who had been left unconquered by Joshua, these are the only tribes mentioned in this brief survey as the nations through which the Lord would prove His people.—Vers. 5, 6. But the Israelites did not stand the test. Dwelling in the midst of the Canaanites, of whom six tribes are enumerated, as in Ex. iii. 8, 17, etc. (see at Deut. vii. 1), they contracted marriages with them, and served their gods, contrary to the express prohibition of the Lord in Ex. xxxiv. 16, xxiii. 24, and Deut. vii. 3, 4.

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## II.—HISTORY OF THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES.

### CHAP. III. 7–XVI. 31.

In order that we may be able to take a distinct survey of the development of the Israelites in the three different stages of their history during the times of the judges, the first thing of importance to be done is to determine *the chronology of the period of the judges*, inasmuch as not only have greatly divergent opinions prevailed upon this point, but hypotheses have been set up, which endanger and to some extent directly overthrow the historical character of the accounts which the book of Judges contains.[1] If we take a superficial glance at the chronological data contained in

[1] *Rud. Chr. v. Bennigsen*, for example, reckons up fifty different calculations, and the list might be still further increased by the addition of both older and more recent attempts (see *Winer*, Bibl. Real-Wörterb. ii. pp. 327–8). *Lepsius* (Chronol. der Æg. i. 315–6, 365 sqq. and 377–8) and *Bunsen* (Ægypten, i. pp. 209 sqq. iv. 318 sqq., and Bibelwerk, i. pp. ccxxxvii. sqq.), starting from the position maintained by *Ewald* and *Bertheau*, that the chronological data of the book of Judges are for the most part to be regarded as round numbers, have sought for light to explain the chronology of the Bible in the darkness of the history of ancient Egypt, and with their usual confidence pronounce it an indisputable truth that the whole of the period of the Judges did not last longer than from 169 to 187 years.

the book, it appears a very simple matter to make the calculation required, inasmuch as the duration of the different hostile oppressions, and also the length of time that most of the judges held their office, or at all events the duration of the peace which they secured for the nation, are distinctly given. The following are the numbers that we find:—

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Oppression by Chushan-rishathaim | (chap. iii. 8), | 8 | years. |
| Deliverance by Othniel, and rest | (chap. iii. 11), | 40 | ,, |
| 2. Oppression by the Moabites | (chap. iii. 14), | 18 | ,, |
| Deliverance by Ehud, and rest | (chap. iii. 30), | 80 | ,, |
| 3. Oppression by the Canaanitish king Jabin | (chap. iv. 3), | 20 | ,, |
| Deliverance by Deborah and Barak, and rest | (chap. v. 31), | 40 | ,, |
| 4. Oppression by the Midianites | (chap. vi. 1), | 7 | ,, |
| Deliverance by Gideon, and rest | (chap. viii. 28), | 40 | ,, |
| Abimelech's reign | (chap. ix. 22), | 3 | ,, |
| Tola, judge | (chap. x. 2), | 23 | ,, |
| Jair, judge | (chap. x. 3), | 22 | ,, |
| | Total, | 301 | years. |
| 5. Oppression by the Ammonites | (chap. x. 8), | 18 | ,, |
| Deliverance by Jephthah, who judged Israel | (chap. xii. 7), | 6 | ,, |
| Ibzan, judge | (chap. xii. 9), | 7 | ,, |
| Elon, judge | (chap. xii. 11), | 10 | ,, |
| Abdon, judge | (chap. xii. 14), | 8 | ,, |
| 6. Oppression by the Philistines | (chap. xiii. 1), | 40 | ,, |
| At this time Samson judged Israel for 20 years | (chap. xv. 20; xvi. 31). | | |
| | Total, | 390 | years. |
| For if to this we add (*a*) the time of Joshua, which is not distinctly mentioned, and | | 20 | ,, |
| (*b*.) The time during which Eli was judge (1 Sam. iv. 18), | | 40 | ,, |
| | We obtain | 450 | years.[1] |
| And if we add still further— | | | |
| (*c*.) The times of Samuel and Saul combined, | | 40 | ,, |
| (*d*.) The reign of David (2 Sam. v. 4; 1 Kings ii. 11), | | 40 | ,, |
| (*e*.) The reign of Solomon to the building of the temple (1 Kings vi. 1), | | 3 | ,, |
| The whole time from the entrance of Israel into Canaan to the building of the temple amounted to | | 533 | years. |

[1] The earlier chronologists discovered a confirmation of this as the length of time that the period of the judges actually lasted in Acts xiii. 20, where Paul in his speech at Antioch in Pisidia says, according to the *textus receptus*, "After that He gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years

Or if we add the forty years spent in the wilderness, the time that elapsed between the exodus from Egypt and the building of the temple was 573 years. But the interval was not so long as this; for, according to 1 Kings vi. 1, Solomon built the house of the Lord in the 480th year after the children of Israel came out of Egypt, and in the fourth year of his reign. And no well-founded objections can be raised as to the correctness and historical credibility of this statement. It is true that the LXX. have "the 440th year" instead of the 480th; but this reading is proved to be erroneous by *Aquila* and *Symmachus*, who adopt the number 480 in common with all the rest of the ancient versions, and it is now almost unanimously rejected (see *Ewald*, Gesch. ii. p. 479). In all probability it owed its origin to an arbitrary mode of computing the period referred to by reckoning eleven generations of forty years each (see *Ed. Preuss;* die Zeitrechnung der LXX. pp. 78 sqq.). On the other hand, the number 480 of the Hebrew text cannot rest upon a mere reckoning of generations, since the year and month of Solomon's reign are given in 1 Kings vi. 1; and if we deduct this date from the 480, there remain 477 or 476 years, which do not form a cyclical number at all.[1] Again, the exodus of Israel from Egypt

until Samuel the prophet." The discrepancy between this verse and the statement in 1 Kings vi. 1, that Solomon built the temple in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of Egypt, many have endeavoured to remove by a remark, which is correct in itself, viz. that the apostle merely adopted the traditional opinion of the Jewish schools, which had been arrived at by adding together the chronological data of the book of Judges, without entering into the question of its correctness, as it was not his intention to instruct his hearers in chronology. But this passage cannot prove anything at all; for the reading given in the *lect. rec.* is merely founded upon *Cod. Cant.* and *Laud.*, and the text of *Matthæi;* whilst the oldest reading not only according to the *Codd. Al.*, *Vat.*, *Ephr. S. rescr.*, but according to the *Cod. Sinait. ed. Tischendorf* and several *minuscula*, as well as the *Copt. Sahid. Arm. Vers.* and *Vulg.*, is, *καὶ καθελὼν ἔθνη ἑπτὰ ἐν γῇ Χανααὰν κατεκληρονόμησεν αὐτοῖς τὴν γῆν αὐτῶν ὡς ἔτεσιν τετρακοσίοις καὶ πεντήκοντα, καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα ἔδωκεν κριτὰς ἕως Σαμουὴλ τ. πρ.* This text is rendered thus in the *Vulgate: et destruens gentes septem in terra Chanaan sorte distribuit eis terram eorum quasi post quadringentos et quinquaginta annos: et post hæc dedit judices usque ad Samuel prophetam*, and can hardly be understood in any other sense than this, that Paul reckoned 450 as the time that elapsed between the call of Abraham (or the birth of Isaac) and the division of the land, namely 215 + 215 (according to the Alex. reading of Ex. xii. 40: see the comm. on this passage) + 40 = 470, or about 450.

[1] *Bertheau* has quite overlooked this when he endeavours to make the 480 years from the exodus to the building of the temple into a cyclical number, and

was an "epoch-making" event, which was fixed in the recollection of the people as no other ever was, so that allusions to it run through the whole of the Old Testament. Moreover, the very fact that it does not tally with the sum total of the numbers in the book of Judges is an argument in favour of its correctness; whereas all the chronological calculations that differ from this bring us back to these numbers, such, for example, as the different statements of Josephus, who reckons the period in question at 592 years in Ant. viii. 3, 1, and on the other hand, at 612 years in Ant. xx. 10 and c. Ap. ii. 2.[1] Lastly, it may easily be shown that there are several things assumed in this chronological survey which have no foundation in the text. This applies both to the assumed succession of the Ammonitish and Philistine oppressions, and also to the introduction of the forty years of Eli's life as judge after or in addition to the forty years that the Philistines ruled over Israel.

The current view, that the forty years of oppression on the part of the Philistines did not commence till after the death of Jephthah or Abdon, is apparently favoured, no doubt, by the circumstance, that this oppression is not described till after the death of Abdon (chap. xii. 15), and is introduced with the usual formula, "And the

appeals in support of this to 1 Chron. vi. 35 sqq. (cf. v. 29 sqq.), where twelve generations are reckoned from Aaron to Ahimaaz, the contemporary of David. But it is perfectly arbitrary on his part to include Ahimaaz, who was a boy in the time of David (2 Sam. xv. 27, 36, xviii. 19, 22, 27 sqq.), as the representative of a generation that was contemporaneous with David; whereas it was not Ahimaaz, but his father Zadok, *i.e.* the eleventh high priest from Aaron, who anointed Solomon as king (1 Kings i. 39, ii. 35), and therefore there had been only eleven high priests from the exodus to the building of the temple. If therefore this period was to be divided into generations of forty years each on the ground of the genealogies in the Chronicles, there could only be eleven generations counted, and this is just what the LXX. have done.

[1] *Josephus* adds together the numbers which occur in the book of Judges. Reckoning from the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim to the forty years' oppression of the Philistines (inclusive), these amount to 390 years, if we regard Samson's twenty years as forming part of the Philistine oppression, or to 410 years if they are reckoned separately. Let us add to this the forty years of the journey through the wilderness, the twenty-five years which Josephus assigns to Joshua (Ant. v. 1, 29), the forty years of Eli, the twelve years which he allots to Samuel before the election of Saul as king (vi. 13, 5), and the forty years which he reckons to Samuel and Saul together, and lastly, the forty and a half years of David's reign and the four years of Solomon's up to the time when the temple was built, and we obtain $40 + 25 + 40 + 12 + 40 + 40\frac{1}{2} + 4 = 201\frac{1}{2}$ years; and these added to 390 make $591\frac{1}{2}$, or added to 410 they amount to 611 years.

children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord," etc. (chap. xiii. 1). But this formula, taken by itself, does not furnish any certain proof that the oppression which it introduces did not take place till after what has been already described, especially in the absence of any more definite statement, such as the clause introduced into chap. iv. 1, "when Ehud was dead," or the still more definite remark, that the land had rest so many years (chap. iii. 11, 30, v. 31; cf. chap. viii. 32). Now in the case before us, instead of any such statement as to time, we find the general remark in chap. x. 6 sqq., that when the Israelites sank into idolatry again, Jehovah sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon; and after this there simply follows an account of the oppression on the part of the Ammonites, and the eventual deliverance effected by Jephthah (chap. x. 8–xii. 7), together with an enumeration of three judges who succeeded Jephthah (chap. xii. 8–15); but we learn nothing further about the oppression on the part of the Philistines which is mentioned in chap. x. 7. When, therefore, it is still further related, in chap. xiii. 1, that the Lord delivered the Israelites into the hand of the Philistines forty years, this cannot possibly refer to another oppression on the part of the Philistines subsequent to the one noticed in chap. x. 7; but the true explanation must be, that the historian proceeds here for the first time to describe the oppression noticed in chap. x. 7, and introduces his description with the formula he generally adopted: "And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord," etc. The oppression itself, therefore, commenced at the same time as that of the Ammonites, and continued side by side with it; but it lasted much longer, and did not come to an end till a short time before the death of Elon the judge. This is confirmed beyond all doubt by the fact, that although the Ammonites crossed the Jordan to fight against Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim, it was chiefly the tribes of Israel who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan that were oppressed by them (chap. x. 8, 9), and that it was only by these tribes that Jephthah was summoned to make war upon them, and was elected as their head and prince (chap. xi. 5–11), and also that it was only the Ammonites in the country to the east of the Jordan whom he subdued then before the Israelites (chap. xi. 32, 33). From this it is very evident that Jephthah, and his successors Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, were not judges over all Israel, and neither fought against the Philistines nor delivered Israel from the oppression of those enemies who invaded the land from the

south-west; so that the omission of the expression, "the land had rest," etc., from chap. xi. and xii., is very significant.[1]

But if the Ammonitish and Philistine oppressions occurred at the same time, of course only one of them must be taken into account in our chronological calculations as to the duration of the period of the judges; and the one selected must be the one to the close of which the chronological data of the next period are immediately appended. But this is not the case with the account of the Ammonitish oppression, of the deliverance effected by Jephthah, and of the judges who succeeded him (Ibzan, Elôn, and Abdon), because the chronological thread of this series of events is broken off with the death of Abdon, and is never resumed again. It is so, however, with the Philistine oppression, which is said to have lasted forty years, though the termination of it is not given in the book of Judges. Samson merely began to deliver Israel out of the power of the Philistines (chap. xiii. 5), but did not accomplish their complete deliverance. He judged Israel for twenty years in the days

[1] Even *Hitzig*, who denies that the oppression of the Philistines was contemporaneous with that of the Ammonites, is obliged to acknowledge that "it is true, the author first of all disposed very properly of the Ammonitish war before entering into the details of the war with the Philistines, with which it had no connection, and which was not brought to a close so soon." When therefore, notwithstanding this, he adduces as evidence that they were not contemporaneous, the fact that "according to the context, and to all analogy (cf. chap. iv. 1, iii. 11, 12), the author intends to write, in chap. xiii. 1, that after the death of Abdon, when there was no judge in Israel, the nation fell back into its former lawlessness, and as a punishment was given up to the Philistines," a more careful study of the passages cited (chap. iv. 1, iii. 11, 12) will soon show that the supposed analogy does not exist at all, since the expression, "the land had rest," etc., really occurs in both instances (see chap. iii. 11 and 31), whereas it is omitted before chap. xiii. 1. The still further assertion, however, that the account of the Philistine war ought to have followed immediately upon that of the war with the Ammonites, if the intention was to describe this with equal fulness, has no force whatever. If neither Jephthah nor the three judges who followed him had anything to do with the Philistines, if they merely judged the tribes that were oppressed and threatened by the Ammonites, it was natural that everything relating to them should be attached to the account of the defeat of the Ammonites, in order that there might be no unnecessary separation of what was so intimately connected together. And whilst these objections are thus proved to have no force, the objection raised to the contemporaneous occurrence of the two oppressions is wrecked completely upon the distinct statement in chap. x. 7, that Jehovah sold the Israelites into the hands of the Philistines and Ammonites, which Hitzig can only get over by declaring, without the slightest foundation, that the words "into the hands of the Philistines" are spurious, simply because they stand in the way of his own assumption.

of the Philistines, *i.e.* during the oppression of the Philistines (chap. xv. 20); consequently the twenty years of his labours must not be taken into account in the chronology of the period of the judges, inasmuch as they are all included in the forty years of the Philistines' rule. At the death of Samson, with which the book of Judges closes, the power of the Philistines was not yet broken; and in chap. iv. of the first book of Samuel we find the Philistines still fighting against the Israelites, and that with such success that the Israelites were defeated by them, and even lost the ark of the covenant. This war must certainly be a continuation of the Philistine oppression, to which the acts of Samson belonged, since the termination of that oppression is not mentioned in the book of Judges; and on the other hand, the commencement of the oppression referred to in 1 Sam. iv. 9 sqq. is not given in the book of Samuel. Consequently even *Hitzig* supports the view which I have expressed, that the forty years' supremacy of the Philistines, noticed in Judg. xiii. 1, is carried on into the book of Samuel, and extends to 1 Sam. vii. 3, 7, and that it was through Samuel that it was eventually brought to a termination (1 Sam. vii. 10 sqq.). But if this is established, then the forty years during which Eli was judge cannot have followed the Philistine oppression and the deeds performed by Samson, and therefore must not be reckoned separately. For since Eli died in consequence of the account of the capture of the ark by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv. 18), and seven months (1 Sam. vi. 1) and twenty years elapsed after this catastrophe before the Philistines were defeated and humiliated by Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 2), only the last half of the forty years of Eli's judicial life falls within the forty years of the Philistine rule over Israel, whilst the first half coincides with the time of the judge Jair. Eli himself was not a judge in the strict sense of the word. He was neither commander of the army, nor secular governor of the nation, but simply the high priest; and in this capacity he administered the civil law in the supreme court, altogether independently of the question whether there was a secular governor at the time or not. After the death of Eli, Israel continued for more than twenty years utterly prostrate under the yoke of the Philistines. It was during this period that Samson made the Philistines feel the power of the God of Israel, though he could not deliver the Israelites entirely from their oppression. Samuel laboured at the same time, as the prophet of the Lord, to promote the inward and spiritual strength of Israel, and that with such success, that the people came to Mizpeh at his

summons, and there put away the strange gods that they had hitherto worshipped, and worshipped the Lord alone; after which the Lord hearkened to Samuel's prayer, and gave them a complete victory over the Philistines (1 Sam. vii. 2–11). After this victory, which was gained not very long after the death of Samson, Samuel undertook the supreme government of Israel as judge, and eventually at their own desire, and with the consent of God, gave them a king in the person of Saul the Benjaminite. This was not till Samuel himself was old, and had appointed as his successors in the office of judge his own sons, who did not walk in their father's ways (1 Sam. viii.–x.). Even under Saul, however, Samuel continued to the very end of his life to labour as the prophet of the Lord for the well-being of Israel, although he laid down his office of judge as soon as Saul had been elected king. He announced to Saul how he had been rejected by God on account of his disobedience; he anointed David as king; and his death did not occur till after Saul had begun to be troubled by the evil spirit, and to plot for David's life (1 Sam. xxv. 1), as we may learn from the fact that David fled to Samuel at Ramah when Saul resolved to slay him (1 Sam. xix. 18).

How long Samuel judged Israel between the victory gained at Ebenezer (1 Sam. vii.) and the election of Saul as king of Israel, is not stated in the Old Testament, nor even the length of Saul's reign, as the text of 1 Sam. xiii. 1 is corrupt. But we shall not be very far from the truth, if we set down about forty years as the time covered by the official life of Samuel as judge after that event and the reign of Saul, and reckon from seventeen to nineteen years as the duration of Samuel's judgeship, and from twenty to twenty-two as the length of Saul's reign. For it is evident from the accounts that we possess of the lives and labours of Samuel and Saul, that Saul did not reign forty years (the time given by Paul in Acts xiii. 21, according to the traditional opinion current in the Jewish schools), but at the most from twenty to twenty-two; and this is now pretty generally admitted (see at 1 Sam. xiii. 1). When David was chosen king of Judah at Hebron after the death of Saul, he was thirty years old (2 Sam. v. 1–4), and can hardly have been anointed king by Samuel at Bethlehem before the age of twenty. For though his father Jesse was still living, and he himself was the youngest of Jesse's eight sons, and was feeding the flock (1 Sam. xvi. 6–12), and even after this is still described as נַעַר (1 Sam. xvii. 42, 55), Jesse was זָקֵן (an old man) at the time (1 Sam. xvii. 12), at any rate sixty years old or more, so that his

eldest son might be forty years old, and David, the youngest, as much as twenty. For נַעַר was not only applied to a mere boy, but to a young man approaching twenty; and the keeping of sheep was not merely a task performed by shepherd boys, but also by the grown-up sons of a family, among whom we must certainly reckon David, since he had already contended with lions and bears in the steppe, and slain these beasts of prey (1 Sam. xvii. 34–36), and shortly afterwards was not only recommended to king Saul by his courtiers, as "a mighty valiant man, and a man of war, and wise in speech," to cheer up the melancholy king by his playing upon the harp (1 Sam. xvi. 18), but also undertook to fight with the giant Goliath (1 Sam. xvii.), and was placed in consequence over the men of war, and was afterwards made captain of a thousand, and betrothed to his daughter Michal (1 Sam. xviii. 5, 13, 17 sqq.). But if David was anointed by Samuel at the age of about twenty years, Saul could not have reigned more than ten years after that time, as David was made king at the age of thirty. And he cannot have reigned much longer before that time. For, apart from the fact that everything which is related of his former wars and deeds could easily have occurred within the space of ten years, the circumstance that Samuel lived till the last years of Saul's reign, and died but a few years before Saul's death (1 Sam. xxv. 1), precludes the assumption that he reigned any longer than that. For Samuel was already so old that he had appointed his sons as judges, whereupon the people desired a king, and assigned as the reason, that Samuel's sons did not walk in his ways (1 Sam. viii. 1–4), from which it is very evident that they had already filled the office of judge for some considerable time. If we add to this the fact that Samuel was called to be a prophet before the death of Eli, and therefore was no doubt twenty-five or thirty years old when Eli died, and that twenty years and seven months elapsed between the death of Eli and the defeat of the Philistines, so that Samuel may have been about fifty years old at that time, and that he judged the people from this time forward till he had become an old man, and then gave the nation a king in the person of Saul, we cannot assign more than forty years as the interval between the defeat of the Philistines and the death of Saul, without attributing to Samuel an age of more than ninety years, and therefore we cannot reckon more than forty or thirty-nine years as the time that intervened between the installation of Samuel in his office as judge and the commencement of the reign of Saul.

According to this, the chronology of the times of the judges may be arranged as follows:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *a.* From the oppression of Chushan-rishathaim to the death of Jair the judge (*vid.* p. 277), | 301 | years. |
| *b.* Duration of the Philistine oppression, | 40 | ,, |
| *c.* Judgeship of Samuel and reign of Saul, | 39 | ,, |
| *d.* David's reign (7½ and 33 years), | 40 | ,, |
| *e.* Solomon's reign to the building of the temple, | 3 | ,, |
| | 423 | years. |
| *a.* The wandering in the desert, | 40 | ,, |
| *b.* The time between the entrance into Canaan and the division of the land, | 7 | ,, |
| *c.* From the division of Canaan to the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim, | 10 | ,, |
| | 480 | years. |

These numbers are as thoroughly in harmony with 1 Kings vi. 1, and also with the statement made by Jephthah in his negotiations with the king of the Ammonites, that Israel dwelt in Heshbon and the cities along the bank of the Arnon for three hundred years (Judg. xi. 26), as we could possibly expect so general a statement in round numbers to be. For instance, as the chronological data of the book of Judges give 301 years as the interval between the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim and the commencement of the Ammonitish oppression, and as only about ten years elapsed between the division of Canaan, after which the tribes on the east of the Jordan first established themselves firmly in Gilead, and the invasion of Chushan, the Israelites had dwelt 310 years in the land on the other side of the Jordan at the time of Jephthah's negotiations with the Ammonites, or at the most 328, admitting that these negotiations may possibly not have taken place till towards the end of the eighteen years' oppression on the part of the Ammonites, so that Jephthah could appeal with perfect justice to the fact that they had been in possession of the land for 300 years.

This statement of Jephthah, however, furnishes at the same time an important proof that the several chronological data contained in our book are to be regarded as historical, and also that the events are to be reckoned as occurring successively; so that we have no right to include the years of oppression in the years of rest, as is frequently done, or to shorten the whole period from Othniel to Jephthah by arbitrary assumptions of synchronisms, in direct opposition to the text. This testimony removes all foundation from

the hypothesis that the number forty which so frequently occurs is a so-called round number, that is to say, is nothing more than a number derived from a general estimate of the different periods according to generations, or cyclical periods. For if the sum total of the different chronological notices tallies on the whole with the actual duration of the period in question as confirmed by this testimony, the several notices must be regarded as historically true, and that all the more because the greater part of these data consist of such numbers as 6, 8, 18, 20, 22, 23, which can neither be called round nor cyclical. Moreover, the purely cyclical significance of the number forty among the Israelites must first of all be proved. Even *Ewald* (Gesch. ii. pp. 480, 481) most justly observes, that "it is very easy to say that the number forty was a round number in the case of different nations; but this round number must first of all have had its origin in life, and therefore must have had its limited application." If, however, we look more closely at the different occasions on which the space of forty years is mentioned, between the exodus from Egypt and the building of the temple, we shall find that at any rate the first and last passages contain very definite notices of time, and cannot possibly be regarded as containing merely round or cyclical numbers. In the case of the forty years' wandering in the wilderness, this is placed beyond the reach of doubt by the fact that even the months are given of both the second and fortieth years (Num. x. 11, xx. 1; Deut. i. 3), and the intervening space is distinctly stated to have been thirty-eight years (Deut. ii. 14). And the forty years that David is said to have reigned also give the precise number, since he reigned seven and a half years at Hebron, and thirty-three at Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 4, 5; 1 Kings ii. 11). Between these two extreme points we certainly meet with the number forty five times: viz. forty years of rest under Othniel (Judg. iii. 11), the same under Barak and Deborah (chap. v. 31), and the same again under Gideon (chap. viii. 28); also forty years of oppression by the Philistines (chap. xiii. 1), and the forty years that Eli was judge (1 Sam. iv. 18); and in addition to these, we find eighty years of rest after Ehud's victory (Judg. iii. 30). But there are also twelve or thirteen passages in which we find either odd numbers, or at all events numbers that cannot be called cyclical or round (viz. Judg. iii. 8, 14, iv. 3, vi. 1, ix. 22, x. 2, 3, xii. 7, 9, 11, 14, xv. 20, xvi. 31). What is there then to justify our calling the number forty cyclical or round? Is it the impossibility or improbability that in the course

of 253 years Israel should have had rest from hostile oppression on three occasions for forty years, and on one for eighty? Is there anything impossible in this? Certainly not. Is there even an improbability? If there be, surely improbabilities have very often been perfectly true. And in the case before us, the appearance itself loses all significance, when we consider that although if we take entire years the number forty is repeated, yet it cannot be taken so literally as that we are to understand that entire years are intended every time. If David's reign is reckoned as forty years in 2 Sam. v. 4, although, according to ver. 5, he reigned seven years and six months in Hebron and thirty-three years in Jerusalem, it may also be the case that, although forty years is the number given in the book of Judges, the period referred to may actually have been only thirty-nine years and a half, or may have been forty and a half. To this must be added the fact that the time during which the war with the enemy lasted is also included in the years of rest; and this must always have occupied several months, and may sometimes have lasted even more than a year. Now, if we give all these circumstances their due weight, every objection that can be raised as to the correctness and historical credibility of the chronological data of the book of Judges vanishes away, whilst all the attempts that have been made to turn these data into round or cyclical numbers are so arbitrary as to need no special refutation whatever.[1]

[1] The principal representatives of this hypothesis are *Ewald* and his pupil *Bertheau*. According to *Ewald* (Gesch. ii. pp. 473 sqq.), the twelve judges from Othniel to Samson form the historical groundwork of the book, although there are distinct traces that there were many more such rulers, because it was only of these that any reminiscences had been preserved. When, therefore, after the expiration of the whole of this period, the desire arose to bring out into distinct prominence the most important points connected with it, the first thing that was done was to group together these twelve judges, with such brief remarks as we find in the case of five of them (Tola, Jair, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon) in chap. x. 1–5 and xii. 8–15. In their case, too, the precise time was given, so far as it could be still remembered. But, independently of this, the attempt was also made to connect the order of the many alternations of war and peace during these 480 years which occurred, according to 1 Kings vi. 1, between the exodus from Egypt and the building of Solomon's temple, to certain grand and easily remembered divisions; and for this the number forty at once presented itself. For since, according to the oldest traditions, Israel spent forty years in the wilderness, and since David also reigned forty years, it might easily be regarded as a suitable thing to divide the whole into twelve equal parts, and to assign to each forty years a great hero and some striking event: *e.g.* (1) Moses and the wilderness; (2) Joshua and the prosperous rule of the elders; (3) the war with Chushan-rishathaim, and Othniel; (4) the Moabites and

The historical character of the chronological data of the book of Judges being thus established, we obtain a continuous chronology for the history of the Israelitish nation, as we may see from the following survey, to which we append a calculation of the years before Christ :—

Ehud; (5) the Aramæans and Jair; (6) the Canaanites under Jabin, and Deborah; (7) the Midianites and Gideon; (8) Tola, with whose opponents we are not acquainted; (9) the Ammonites and Philistines, or Jephthah and Samson; (10) the Philistines and Eli; (11) Samuel and Saul; (12) David. "Finally, then, these twelve judges from Othniel to Samson were necessarily connected with this different mode of reckoning, so that the several numbers, as well as the order in which the judges occur, which show so evidently (?) that the last editor but one compiled the section extending from chap. iii. to xvi. out of a great variety of sources, *must* have been the resultant of many changes." But *Ewald* looks in vain for any reason for this "must." And the question starts up at once, how could the idea ever have entered any one's mind of dividing these 480 years, from the exodus to the building of the temple, among the twelve judges in this particular manner; that to all the judges, concerning whom it was not known how long their period of labour lasted, forty years each were assigned, when it was known that Israel had wandered forty years in the wilderness, that Joshua had governed forty years with the elders, and Samuel and Saul together had ruled for the same time, and David also, so that there only remained for the judges from Othniel to Samson $480 - 4 \times 40$, *i.e.* only 320 years, or, deducting the first three or four years of Solomon's reign, only 317 or 316 years? These years, if divided among twelve judges, would give only twenty-six or twenty-seven years for each. Or how did they come to allot eighty years to Ehud, and only twenty-two to Jair and twenty-three to Tola, if the two latter had also conquered the hostile oppressors of Israel? And lastly, why was Shamgar left without any, when he delivered Israel from the Philistines? To these and many other questions the author of this hypothesis is unable to give any answer at all; and the arbitrary nature of his mode of manufacturing history is so obvious, that it is unnecessary to waste words in proving it. It is no better with *Bertheau's* hypothesis (Judg. pp. xvi. sqq.). According to this hypothesis, out of the twelve generations from Moses to David which he derives from 1 Chron. vi. 35 sqq., only six (or 240 years) belong to the judges from Othniel to Samson. These have been variously reckoned. One calculation takes them as six generations of forty years each; another reckons them more minutely, adopting smaller numbers which were assigned to the twelve judges and the son of Gideon. But six generations and twelve judges could not be combined in any other way than by assigning twenty years to each judge. Now there was not a single judge who judged Israel for twenty years, with the exception of Samson. And the total number of the years that they judged is not 240, but 296 years ($40 + 80 + 40 + 40 + 23 + 22 + 6 + 7 + 10 + 8 + 20 + x$). Consequently we do not find any trace throughout the book, that the period of the judges was reckoned as consisting of six generations of forty years each. (Compare with this a more elaborate refutation by *Bachmann*, pp. 3 sqq.).

## Chronological Survey of the Principal Events from the Exodus to the Building of Solomon's Temple.

| The Principal Events. | | Duration. | Years before the Birth of Christ. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Exodus of Israel from Egypt, | | — | 1492 |
| The law given at Sinai, | | — | 1492—1491 |
| Death of Aaron and Moses in the fortieth year of the wandering in the desert, | | 40 | 1453 |
| Conquest of Canaan by Joshua, | | 7 | 1452—1445 |
| From the division of the land to the invasion of Chushan-rishathaim, | | 10 | 1445—1435 |
| Death of Joshua, | | — | c. 1442 |
| Wars of the tribes of Israel with the Canaanites, | | — | 1442 onwards |
| War of the congregation with Benjamin, | | — | c. 1436 |
| Oppression by Chushan-rishathaim, | | 8 | 1435—1427 |
| Deliverance by Othniel, and rest, | | 40 | 1427—1387 |
| Oppression by the Moabites, | | 18 | 1387—1369 |
| Deliverance by Ehud, and rest, | | 80 | 1369—1289 |
| Victory of Shamgar over the Philistines, | | — | |
| Oppression by Jabin, | | 20 | 1289—1269 |
| Deliverance by Deborah and Barak, and rest, | | 40 | 1269—1229 |
| Oppression by the Midianites, | | 7 | 1229—1222 |
| Deliverance by Gideon, and rest, | | 40 | 1222—1182 |
| Rule of Abimelech, | | 3 | 1182—1179 |
| Tola, judge, | | 23 | 1179—1156 |
| Jair, judge, | | 22 | 1156—1134 |
| Eli, high priest and judge forty years, | | — | 1154—1114 |
| After repeated apostasy, oppression | | | |
| (*a*) In the East. | (*b*) In the West. | | |
| By the Ammonites 18 years, from 1134 to 1116 B.C. | By the Philistines, | 40 | 1134—1094 |
| | Loss of the ark, | — | c. 1114 |
| Jephthah judge 6 years, from 1116 to 1110 B.C. | Samson's deeds, | — | 1116—1096 |
| | Samuel's prophetic labours, | — | 1114 onwards |
| Ibzan judge 7 years, from 1110 to 1103 B.C. | Defeat of the Philistines, | — | 1094 |
| | Samuel, judge, | 19 | 1094—1075 |
| Elon judge 10 years, from 1103 to 1093 B.C. | Saul, king, | 20 | 1075—1055 |
| | David king at Hebron, | 7 | 1055—1048 |
| Abdon judge 8 years, from 1093 to 1085 B.C. | ,, ,, at Jerusalem, | 33 | 1048—1015 |
| | Solomon's reign to the building of the temple, | 3 | 1015—1012 |
| | Total, | 480 | years. |

All that is required to establish our calculation as to the period of the judges, is to justify our estimate of ten years as the time that intervened between the division of the land and the invasion by Chushan-rishathaim, since the general opinion, founded upon the statement of *Josephus* (Ant. v. 1, 29), that Joshua was στρατηγός of the nation for twenty-five years after the death of Moses, and (vi. 5, 4) that his death was followed by a state of anarchy for eighteen years, is that it was at least thirty-five years. But Josephus at all events ought not to be appealed to, as he had no other sources of information with regard to the earlier portion of the Israelitish history than the Old Testament itself; and he so frequently contradicts himself in his chronological statements, that no reliance can be placed upon them even in cases where their incorrectness cannot be clearly proved. And if we consider, on the other hand, that Joshua was an old man when the two great campaigns in the south and north of Canaan were over, and in fact was so advanced in years, that God commanded him to divide the land, although many districts were still unconquered (Josh. xiii. 1 sqq.), in order that he might finish this part of his calling before his death, there is very little probability that he lived for twenty-five years after that time. The same words are used to describe the last days of his life in chap. xxiii. 1, that had previously been employed to describe his great age (chap. xiii. 1 sqq.). No doubt the statement in chap. xxiii. 1, to the effect that "many days after that the Lord had given rest unto Israel from all their foes," Joshua called together the representatives of the nation, to renew the covenant of the nation with the Lord before his death, when taken in connection with the statement in chap. xix. 50, that he built the city of Timnath-serah, which the tribes had given him for an inheritance after the distribution of the land by lot was over, and dwelt therein, proves very clearly that there were certainly "many days" (*Eng. Ver.* "a long time") between the division of the land and the death of Joshua. But this is so comparative a term, that it hardly embraces more than two or three years. And Joshua might build, *i.e.* fortify Timnath-serah, and dwell therein, even if he only lived for two or three years after the division of the land. On the other hand, there appears to have been a longer interval than the seven or eight years allowed in our reckoning between the death of Joshua and the invasion of Chushan; since it not only includes the defeat of Adoni-bezek, the capture of Jerusalem, Hebron, and other towns, by the tribes of Judah and Simeon (chap. i. 1–14), and the con-

quest of Bethel by the tribe of Joseph (chap. i. 22 sqq.), but also the war of the congregation with the tribe of Benjamin (chap. xix.–xxi.). But it is only in appearance that the interval allowed is too short. All these events together would not require many years, but might very well have occurred within the space of about five years. And it is quite possible that the civil war of the Israelites might have been regarded by king Chushan-rîshathaim as a favourable opportunity for carrying out his design of making Israel tributary to himself, and that he took advantage of it accordingly. The very fact that Othniel delivered Israel from this oppression, after it had continued for eight years, precludes us from postponing the invasion itself to a longer period after the death of Joshua. For Othniel was not Caleb's nephew, as many suppose, but his younger brother (see at Josh. xv. 17). Now Caleb was eighty-five years old when the distribution of the land commenced (Josh. xiv. 10); so that even if his brother Othniel was thirty, or even forty years younger, he would still be fifty-five, or at any rate forty-five years old, when the division of the land commenced. If the statements of Josephus were correct, therefore, Othniel would have been ninety-one years old, or at any rate eighty-one, when he defeated the Aramæan king Chushan-rishathaim; whereas, according to our calculation, he would only have been fifty or sixty years old when Debir was taken, and sixty-three or seventy-three when Chushan was defeated. Now, even if we take the lower number as the correct one, this would be a sufficiently great age for such a warlike undertaking, especially when we consider that Othniel lived for some time afterwards, as is evident from the words of chap. iii. 11, "And the land had rest forty years: and Othniel the son of Kenaz died," though they may not distinctly affirm that he did not die till the termination of the forty years' rest.

The fact that Caleb's younger brother Othniel was the first judge of Israel, also upsets the hypothesis which *Bertheau* has founded upon a mistaken interpretation of chap. ii. 11–iii. 6, that a whole generation of forty years is to be reckoned between the death of Joshua and the invasion of Chushan, and also the misinterpretation of chap. ii. 7, 10 (cf. Josh. xxiv. 31), according to which the sinful generation did not grow up until after Joshua and all the elders who lived a *long time* after him were dead,—an interpretation which has no support in chap. ii. 7, since הָאָרִיךְ יָמִים אַחֲרֵי does not mean "to live *long* after a person," but simply "to survive him." The "other generation which knew not the Lord," etc., that arose

after the death of Joshua and the elders who outlived him, was not a different generation from the succeeding generations, which were given up to the power of their foes on account of their apostasy from the Lord, but the younger generation generally, which took the place of the older men who had seen the works of the Lord under Joshua; in other words, this is only a comprehensive expression for all the succeeding generations who forgot Jehovah their God and served Baalim. So much may be said in vindication of our calculations as to the period of the judges.

### I. TIMES OF THE JUDGES: OTHNIEL; EHUD AND SHAMGAR; DEBORAH AND BARAK.—CHAP. III. 7–V.

In this first stage of the times of the judges, which embraces a period of 206 years, the Israelites were oppressed by hostile nations on three separate occasions: first of all by the Mesopotamian king Chushan-rishathaim, whom they were obliged to serve for eighteen years, until Othniel brought them deliverance, and secured them rest for forty years (chap. iii. 7–11); secondly by the Moabitish king Eglon for eighteen years, until Ehud slew this king and smote the Moabites, and so humiliated them, that the land had rest for eighty years (chap. iii. 12–30), whilst Shamgar also smote a host of Philistines during the same period (chap. iii. 31); and lastly by the Canaanitish king Jabin of Hazor, who oppressed them heavily for twenty years, until Barak gathered an army together at the summons of Deborah the prophetess and with her assistance, and completely defeated the foe (chap. iv.). After this victory, which Deborah celebrated in a triumphal song, the land had rest again for forty years (chap. v.).

#### *Oppression of Israel by Chushan-rishathaim, and Deliverance by Othniel.*—Chap. iii. 7–11.

Vers. 7, 8. The first chastisement which the Israelites suffered for their apostasy from the Lord, is introduced with the same formula which had been used before to describe the times of the judges generally (chap. ii. 11, 12), except that instead of וַיַּעַזְבוּ אֶת־יי׳ (" they forsook the Lord") we have here וַיִּשְׁכְּחוּ אֶת־יי׳ (" *they forgot the Lord their God*") from Deut. xxxii. 18 (cf. 1 Sam. xii. 9), and *Asheroth* (rendered " groves") instead of *Ashtaroth* (see at chap. ii. 13). As a punishment for this apostasy, the Lord sold them (chap. ii. 14) into the hand of *Chushan-rishathaim*, the king of Meso-

potamia, whom they were obliged to serve for eight years. All that we know about this king of Mesopotamia is what is recorded here. His name, Chushan-rishathaim, is probably only a title which was given to him by the Israelites themselves. *Rishathaim* signifies "*double wickedness*," and the word was rendered as an appellative with this signification in the Targums and the Syriac and Arabic versions. *Chushan* is also formed as an adjective from *Cush*, and may denote the Cushites. According to *M. v. Niebuhr* (Gesch. Assurs u. Babels, p. 272), the rulers of Babylon at that time (1518–1273) were Arabs. "Arabs, however, may have included not only Shemites of the tribe of Joktan or Ishmael, but Cushites also." The invasion of Canaan by this Mesopotamian or Babylonian king has a historical analogy in the campaign of the five allied kings of Shinar in the time of Abraham (Gen. xiv.).

Vers. 9–11. In this oppression the Israelites cried to the Lord for help, and He raised them up מוֹשִׁיעַ, a deliverer, helper, namely the Kenizzite *Othniel*, the younger brother and son-in-law of Caleb (see at Josh. xv. 17). "*The Spirit of Jehovah came upon him.*" The Spirit of God is the spiritual principle of life in the world of nature and man; and in man it is the principle both of the natural life which we receive through birth, and also of the spiritual life which we receive through regeneration (*vid. Auberlen*, Geist des Menschen, in *Herzog's* Cycl. iv. p. 731). In this sense the expressions "Spirit of God" (*Elohim*) and "Spirit of the Lord" (Jehovah) are interchanged even in Gen. i. 2, compared with Gen. vi. 3, and so throughout all the books of the Old Testament; the former denoting the Divine Spirit generally in its supernatural causality and power, the latter the same Spirit in its operations upon human life and history in the working out of the plan of salvation. In its peculiar operations the Spirit of Jehovah manifests itself as a spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord (Isa. xi. 2). The communication of this Spirit under the Old Testament was generally made in the form of extraordinary and supernatural influence upon the human spirit. The expression employed to denote this is usually וַתְּהִי עָלָיו רוּחַ יי׳ ("the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him:" thus here, chap. xi. 29; 1 Sam. xix. 20, 23; 2 Chron. xx. 14; Num. xxiv. 2). This is varied, however, with the expressions (וַתִּצְלַח) רוּחַ יי׳ עָלָיו (chap. xiv. 6, 19, xv. 14; 1 Sam. x. 10, xi. 6, xvi. 13) and רוּחַ יי׳ לָבְשָׁה אֶת־, "the Spirit of Jehovah clothed the man" (chap. vi. 34; 1 Chron. xii. 18; 2 Chron. xxiv. 20). Of these the

former denotes the operations of the Divine Spirit in overcoming the resistance of the natural will of man, whilst the latter represents the Spirit of God as a power which envelopes or covers a man. The recipients and bearers of this Spirit were thereby endowed with the power to perform miraculous deeds, in which the Spirit of God that came upon them manifested itself generally in the ability to prophesy (*vid.* 1 Sam. x. 10, xix. 20, 23; 1 Chron xii. 18; 2 Chron. xx. 14, xxiv. 20), but also in the power to work miracles or to accomplish deeds which surpassed the courage and strength of the natural man. The latter was more especially the case with the judges; hence the *Chaldee* paraphrases "the Spirit of Jehovah" in chap. vi. 34 as the "spirit of might from the Lord;" though in the passage before us it gives the erroneous interpretation רוּחַ נְבוּאָה, "the spirit of prophecy." *Kimchi* also understands it as signifying "the spirit of bravery, under the instigation of which he was able fearlessly to enter upon the war with Chushan." But we are hardly at liberty to split up the different powers of the Spirit of God in this manner, and to restrict its operations upon the judges to the spirit of strength and bravery alone. The judges not only attacked the enemy courageously and with success, but they also judged the nation, for which the spirit of wisdom and understanding was indispensably necessary, and put down idolatry (chap. ii. 18, 19), which they could not have done without the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. "*And he judged Israel and went out to war.*" The position of וַיִּשְׁפֹּט before וַיֵּצֵא לַמִּלְחָמָה does not warrant us in explaining וַיִּשְׁפֹּט as signifying "he began to discharge the functions of a judge," as *Rosenmüller* has done: for שָׁפַט must not be limited to a settlement of the civil disputes of the people, but means to restore *right* in Israel, whether towards its heathen oppressors, or with regard to the attitude of the nation towards the Lord. "*And the Lord gave Chushan-rishathaim into his hand* (cf. chap. i. 2, iii. 28, etc.), *and his hand became strong over him;*" *i.e.* he overcame him (cf. chap. vi. 2), or smote him, so that he was obliged to vacate the land. In consequence of this victory, the land had rest from war (cf. Josh. xi. 23) forty years. "*And then Othniel died:*" the expression וַיָּמָת with ו *consec.* does not necessarily imply that Othniel did not die for forty years, but simply that he died after rest had been restored to the land.

*Oppression of Israel by Eglon, and Deliverance by Ehud; Shamgar's heroic Deeds.*—Chap. iii. 12–31.

In vers. 12–30 the subjugation of the Israelites by *Eglon*, the king of the Moabites, and their deliverance from this bondage, are circumstantially described. First of all, in vers. 12–14, *the subjugation.* When the Israelites forsook the Lord again (in the place of וַיַּעֲשׂוּ . . . אֶת־הָרַע וגו׳, ver. 7, we have here the appropriate expression וַיֹּסִפוּ . . . לַעֲשׂוֹת הָרַע, they added to do, *i.e.* did again, evil, etc., as in chap. iv. 1, x. 6, xiii. 1), the Lord made Eglon the king of the Moabites strong over Israel. חִזֵּק עַל, to give a person strength to overcome or oppress another. עַל בִּי, as in Deut. xxxi. 17, instead of the more usual עַל אֲשֶׁר (cf. Jer. iv. 28; Mal. ii. 14; Ps. cxxxix. 14). Eglon allied himself with the Ammonites and Amalekites, those arch-foes of Israel, invaded the land, took the palm-city, *i.e.* Jericho (see at chap. i. 16), and made the Israelites tributary for eighteen years. Sixty years had passed since Jericho had been burnt by Joshua. During that time the Israelites had rebuilt the ruined city, but they had not fortified it, on account of the curse pronounced by Joshua upon any one who should restore it as a fortress; so that the Moabites could easily conquer it, and using it as a base, reduce the Israelites to servitude.—Ver. 15. But when the Israelites cried to the Lord for help, He set them free through the Benjaminite *Ehud*, whom He raised up as their deliverer. *Ehud* was "the son of Gera." This probably means that he was a descendant of Gera, since Gera himself, according to 1 Chron. viii. 3, was a son of Bela the son of Benjamin, and therefore was a grandson of Benjamin; and Shimei the contemporary of David, a man belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, is also called a son of Gera in 2 Sam. xvi. 5, xix. 17. At the same time, it is possible that the name *Gera* does not refer to the same person in these different passages, but that the name was repeated again and again in the same family. "*A man shut with regard to his right hand*," *i.e.* hindered in the use of his right hand, not necessarily crippled, but in all probability disabled through want of use from his youth upwards. That the expression does not mean crippled, is confirmed by the fact that it is used again in connection with the 700 brave slingers in the army of the Benjaminites in chap. xx. 16, and it certainly cannot be supposed that they were all actual cripples. So much is certain, however, that it does not mean ἀμφοτεροδέξιος, *qui utraque manu pro dextera utebatur* (LXX.,

*Vulg.*), since אָטַר signifies *clausit* (shut) in Ps. lxix. 16. It is merely with reference to what follows that this peculiarity is so distinctly mentioned.—The Israelites sent a present by him to king Eglon. בְּיָדוֹ does not mean *in*, but *through*, his hand, *i.e.* through his intervention, for others were actually employed to carry the present (ver. 18), so that Ehud merely superintended the matter. *Minchah*, a gift or present, is no doubt a euphemism for tribute, as in 2 Sam. viii. 2, 6, 1 Kings v. 1.—Ver. 16. Ehud availed himself of the opportunity to approach the king of the Moabites and put him to death, and thus to shake off the yoke of the Moabites from his nation. To this end he provided himself with a sword, which had two edges (פִּיּוֹת from פֶּה, like שִׁיּוֹ, Deut. xxii. 1, from שֶׂה), a cubit long (גֹּמֶד, *ἀπ. λεγ.*, signified primarily a staff, here a cubit, according to the Syriac and Arabic; not "a span," *σπιθαμή*, LXX.), and "*did gird it under his raiment upon his right thigh.*" —Ver. 17. Provided with this weapon, he brought the present to king Eglon, who—as is also mentioned as a preparation for what follows—was a very fat man.—Vers. 18, 19. After presenting the gift, Ehud dismissed the people who had carried the present to their own homes; namely, as we learn from ver. 19, after they had gone some distance from Jericho. But he himself returned from the stone-quarries at Gilgal, *sc.* to Jericho to king Eglon. מִן הַפְּסִילִים refers to some place by Gilgal. In Deut. vii. 25, Isa. xxi. 9, Jer. viii. 19, *pesilim* signifies idols. And if we would retain this meaning here, as the LXX., *Vulg.*, and others have done, we must assume that in the neighbourhood of Gilgal there were stone idols set up in the open air,—a thing which is very improbable. The rendering "stone quarries," from פָּסַל, to hew out stones (Ex. xxxiv. 1, etc.), which is the one adopted in the *Chaldee*, and by *Rashi* and others, is more likely to be the correct one. *Gilgal* cannot be the Gilgal between Jericho and the Jordan, which was the first encampment of the Israelites in Canaan, as is commonly supposed, since Ehud passed the *Pesilim* on his flight from the king's dwelling-place to the mountains of Ephraim (vers. 26, 27); and we can neither assume, as *Bertheau* does, that Eglon did not reside in the conquered palm-city (Jericho), but in some uncultivated place in the neighbourhood of the Jordan, nor suppose that after the murder of Eglon Ehud could possibly have gone from Jericho to the Gilgal which was half an hour's journey towards the east, for the purpose of escaping by a circuitous route of this kind to Seirah in the mountains of Ephraim, which was on the north-west of

Jericho. *Gilgal* is more likely to be *Geliloth*, which was on the west of Jericho opposite to the ascent of Adummim (*Kaalat ed Dom*), on the border of Judah and Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 17), and which was also called *Gilgal* (Josh. xv. 7). Having returned to the king's palace, Ehud sent in a message to him: "*I have a secret word to thee, O king.*" The context requires that we should understand "*he said*" in the sense of "he had him told" (or bade say to him), since Ehud himself did not go in to the king, who was sitting in his room, till afterwards (ver. 20). In consequence of this message the king said: הָס, *lit.* be silent (the imperative of הָסָה); here it is a proclamation, Let there be quiet. Thereupon all who were standing round (viz. his attendants) left the room, and Ehud went in (ver. 20). The king was sitting "in his upper room of cooling alone." The "room of cooling" (*Luther, Sommerlaube*, summer-arbour) was a room placed upon the flat roof of a house, which was open to the currents of air, and so afforded a cool retreat, such as are still met with in the East (*vid. Shaw*, pp. 188–9). Then Ehud said, "*A word of God I have to thee;*" whereupon the king rose from his seat, from reverence towards the word of God which Ehud pretended that he had to deliver to him, not to defend himself, as *Bertheau* supposes, of which there is not the slightest intimation in the text.—Vers. 21, 22. But when the king stood up, Ehud drew his sword from under his garment, and plunged it so deeply into his abdomen that even the hilt followed the blade, and the fat closed upon the blade (so that there was nothing to be seen of it in front, because he did not draw the sword again out of his body), and the blade came out between the legs. The last words have been rendered in various ways. *Luther* follows the Chaldee and *Vulgate*, and renders it "so that the dirt passed from him," taking the *ἅπ. λεγ.* פַּרְשְׁדֹנָה as a composite noun from פֶּרֶשׁ, *stercus*, and שָׁדָה, *jecit*. But this is hardly correct, as the form of the word פַּרְשְׁדֹנָה, and its connection with יָצָא, rather points to a noun, פַּרְשֶׁדֹן, with ה local. The explanation given by *Gesenius* in his *Thes.* and *Heb. lex.* has much more in its favour, viz. *interstitium pedum*, the place between the legs, from an Arabic word signifying *pedes dissitos habuit*, used as a euphemism for *anus, podex*. The subject to the verb is the blade.[1]—Ver. 23. As soon as the deed was

[1] At any rate the rendering suggested by *Ewald*, "Ehud went into the open air, or into the enclosure, the space in front of the *Alija*," is untenable, for the simple reason that it is perfectly irreconcilable with the next clause, "Ehud went forth," etc. (consequently *Fr. Böttcher* proposes to erase this

accomplished, Ehud went out into the porch or front hall, shut the door of the room behind him (בַּעֲדוֹ, not behind himself, but literally round him, *i.e.* Eglon; cf. Gen. vii. 16, 2 Kings iv. 4) and bolted it (this is only added as a more precise explanation of the previous verb).—Vers. 24, 25. When the servants of Eglon came (to enter in to their lord) after Ehud's departure and saw the door of the upper room bolted, they thought "surely (אַךְ, *lit.* only, nothing but) he covers his feet" (a euphemism for performing the necessities of nature; cf. 1 Sam. xxiv. 3), and waited to shaming (cf. 2 Kings ii. 17, viii. 11), *i.e.* till they were ashamed of their long waiting (see at chap. v. 28). At length they opened the door with the key, and found their lord lying dead upon the floor.

Ehud's conduct must be judged according to the spirit of those times, when it was thought allowable to adopt any means of destroying the enemy of one's nation. The treacherous assassination of a hostile king is not to be regarded as an act of the Spirit of God, and therefore is not set before us as an example to be imitated. Although Jehovah raised up Ehud as a deliverer to His people when oppressed by Eglon, it is not stated (and this ought particularly to be observed) that the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Ehud, and still less that Ehud assassinated the hostile king under the impulse of that Spirit. Ehud proved himself to have been raised up by the Lord as the deliverer of Israel, simply by the fact that he actually delivered his people from the bondage of the Moabites, and it by no means follows that the means which he selected were either commanded or approved by Jehovah.—Vers. 26 sqq. Ehud had escaped whilst the servants of Eglon were waiting, and had passed the stone quarries and reached Seirah. *Seirah* is a place that is never mentioned again; and, judging from the etymology (the hairy), it was a wooded region, respecting the situation of which all that can be decided is, that it is not to be sought for in the neighbourhood of Jericho, but "upon the mountains of Ephraim" (ver. 27). For when Ehud had come to Seirah, he blew the trumpet "*upon the mountains of Ephraim*," to announce to the people the victory that was placed within their reach by the death of Eglon, and to summon them to war with the Moabites, and then went down from the mountain into the plain near Jericho; "*and he was before them*," *i.e.* went in front as their leader, saying to the people,

clause from the text, without any critical authority whatever). For if Ehud were the subject to the verb, the subject would necessarily have been mentioned, as it really is in the next clause, ver. 23*a*.

"*Follow me; for Jehovah has given your enemies the Moabites into your hand.*" Then they went down and took (*i.e.* took possession of) the fords near Jericho (see at Josh. ii. 7), לְמוֹאָב, either "*from the Moabites*" or "*towards Moab,*" and let no one (of the Moabites) cross over, *i.e.* escape to their own land.—Ver. 29. Thus they smote at that time about 10,000 Moabites, all fat and powerful men, *i.e.* the whole army of the enemy in Jericho and on this side of the Jordan, not letting a man escape. The expression "at that time" seems to imply that they did not destroy this number in one single engagement, but during the whole course of the war.—Ver. 30. Thus Moab was subdued under the hand of Israel, and the land had rest for eighty years.

Ver. 31. After him (Ehud) was, *i.e.* there rose up, *Shamgar* the son of Anath. He smote the Philistines, who had probably invaded the land of the Israelites, six hundred men, with an ox-goad, so that he also (like Othniel and Ehud, vers. 9 and 15) delivered Israel. מַלְמַד הַבָּקָר, *ἁπ. λεγ.*, signifies, according to the Rabbins and the ancient versions, an instrument with which they trained and drove oxen; and with this the etymology agrees, as לָמַד is used in Hos. x. 11 and Jer. xxxi. 18 to denote the training of the young ox. According to *Rashi*, מַלְמַד בָּקָר is the same as דָּרְבָּן, *βούκεντρον*, in 1 Sam. xiii. 21. According to *Maundrell* in *Paulus' Samml. der merkw. Reisen nach d. Or.* i. p. 139, the country people in Palestine and Syria use when ploughing goads about eight feet long and six inches in circumference at the thick end. At the thin end they have a sharp point to drive the oxen, and at the other end a small hoe, to scrape off any dirt that may stick to the plough. Shamgar may have smitten the Philistines with some such instrument as this, just as the Edonian prince Lycurgus is described by Homer (Il. vi. 135) as putting Dionysius and the Bacchantines to flight with a *βουπλήξ*. Nothing is recorded about the descent of Shamgar, either here or in the Song of Deborah, in chap. v. 6. The heroic deed recorded of him must be regarded, as *O. v. Gerlach* affirms, as "merely the result of a holy inspiration that suddenly burst forth within him; in which he seized upon the first weapon that came to his hand, and put to flight the enemy when scared by a terror for God, just as Samson did on a later occasion." For he does not seem to have secured for the Israelites any permanent victory over the Philistines. Moreover, he is not called judge, nor is the period of his labours taken into account, but in chap. iv. 1 the renewed apostasy of Israel from the Lord is dated from the death of Ehud.

*Oppression of Israel by Jabin, and Deliverance by Deborah and Barak.*—Chap. iv. and v.

This fresh oppression of the Israelites, and the glorious victory which they obtained over Sisera, Jabin's general, through the judge Deborah and the heroic warrior Barak, are so fully described in Deborah's triumphal song in chap. v., that this song may be regarded as a poetical commentary upon that event. It by no means follows from this fact, however, that the historical account in chap. iv. was first of all founded upon the ode, and was merely intended to furnish an explanation of the song itself. Any such assumption is overthrown by the fact that the prose account in chap. iv. contains, as even *Bertheau* acknowledges, some historical details which we look for in vain in the song, and which are of great assistance in the interpretation of it. All that we can infer with any probability from the internal connection between the historical narrative and the Song of Deborah is, that the author of our book took both of them from one common source; though the few expressions and words which they contain, such as שְׂמִיכָה in ver. 18, תְּצַנַּח in ver. 21, מְשַׁכְתָּ in ver. 6, and וַיְהָם in ver. 15, do not throw any light upon the source from which they were derived. For, with the exception of the first, which is not met with again, the whole of them occur in other passages,—the second in chap. i. 14 and Josh. xv. 18, the third in the same sense in chap. xx. 37, and the fourth in Ex. xiv. 24 and Josh. x. 10. And it by no means follows, that because in the passages referred to, "יָהַם is found in close association with songs or poetical passages" (*Bertheau*), the word itself must be borrowed from the same source as the songs, viz. from the book of Jasher (Josh. x. 13). For הָמַם is found in the same signification in 1 Sam. vii. 10, Ex. xxiii. 27, and Deut. ii. 15, where we look in vain for any songs; whilst it always occurs in connection with the account of a miraculous overthrow of the foe by the omnipotent power of God.

Chap. iv. *The Victory over Jabin and his General Sisera.*—Vers. 1–3. As the Israelites fell away from the Lord again when Ehud was dead, the Lord gave them into the hand of the Canaanitish king *Jabin*, who oppressed them severely for twenty years with a powerful army under *Sisera* his general. The circumstantial clause, "when Ehud was dead," places the falling away of the Israelites from God in direct causal connection with the death of Ehud on the one hand, and the deliverance of Israel into the power of Jabin on the other, and clearly indicates that as long as Ehud lived he

kept the people from idolatry (cf. chap. ii. 18, 19), and defended Israel from hostile oppressions. Joshua had already conquered one king, *Jabin* of *Hazor*, and taken his capital (Josh. xi. 1, 10). The king referred to here, who lived more than a century later, bore the same name. The name *Jabin*, "the discerning," may possibly have been a standing name or title of the Canaanitish kings of Hazor, as Abimelech was of the kings of the Philistines (see at Gen. xxvi. 8). He is called "king of Canaan," in distinction from the kings of other nations and lands, such as Moab, Mesopotamia, etc. (chap. iii. 8, 12), into whose power the Lord had given up His sinful people. *Hazor*, once the capital of the kingdoms of northern Canaan, was situated over (above or to the north of) Lake Huleh, in the tribe of Naphtali, but has not yet been discovered (see at Josh. xi. 1). Sisera, the general of Jabin, dwelt in *Harosheth* of the *Goyim*, and oppressed the Israelites most tyrannically (*mightily*: cf. chap. viii. 1, 1 Sam. ii. 16) for twenty years with a force consisting of 900 chariots of iron (see at Josh. xvii. 16). The situation of *Harosheth*, which only occurs here (vers. 2, 13, 16), is unknown; but it is certainly to be sought for in one of the larger plains of Galilee, possibly the plain of *Buttauf*, where Sisera was able to develop his forces, whose strength consisted chiefly in war-chariots, and to tyrannize over the land of Israel.

Vers. 4–11. At that time the Israelites were judged by *Deborah*, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, who dwelt under the Deborah-palm between Ramah (er Râm: see at Josh. xviii. 25) and Bethel (Beitin: see at Josh. vii. 2) in the tribe of Benjamin, upon the mountains of Ephraim. Deborah is called אִשָּׁה נְבִיאָה on account of her prophetic gift, like Miriam in Ex. xv. 20, and Hulda the wife of Shallum in 2 Kings xxii. 14. This gift qualified her to judge the nation (the participle שֹׁפְטָה expresses the permanence of the act of judging), *i.e.* first of all to settle such disputes among the people themselves as the lower courts were unable to decide, and which ought therefore, according to Deut. xvii. 8, to be referred to the supreme judge of the whole nation. The palm where she sat in judgment (cf. Ps. ix. 5) was called after her the *Deborah*-palm. The Israelites went up to her there to obtain justice. The expression "*came up*" is applied here, as in Deut. xvii. 8, to the place of justice, as a spiritual height, independently of the fact that the place referred to here really stood upon an eminence.—Vers. 6 sqq. But in order to secure the rights of her people against their outward foes also, she summoned *Barak* the son of Abinoam from Kedesh,

in the tribe of Naphtali, on the west of the Huleh lake (see at Josh. xii. 22), and made known to him the commands of the Lord: "*Up and draw to Mount Tabor, and take with thee* 10,000 *men of the children of Naphtali and Zebulun; and I will draw to thee into the brook-valley of Kishon, Sisera the captain of Jabin's army, and his chariots, and his multitude* (his men of war), *and give him into thy hand.*" מָשַׁכְתָּ has been explained in different ways. *Seb. Schmidt, Clericus*, and others supply הַקֶּרֶן or הַשּׁוֹפָר, draw with the trumpet (cf. Ex. xix. 13, Josh. vi. 5), *i.e.* blow the trumpet in long-drawn tones, upon Mount Tabor, and regard this as the signal for convening the people; whilst *Hengstenberg* (Diss. ii. pp. 76, 77) refers to Num. x. 9, and understands the blowing of the horn as the signal by which the congregation of the Lord made known its need to Him, and appealed to Him to come to its help. It cannot indeed be proved that the blowing of the trumpet was merely the means adopted for convening the people together; in fact, the use of the following מָשַׁכְתִּי, in the sense of draw, is to be explained on the supposition that מָשַׁכְתָּ is used in a double sense. "The long-drawn notes were to draw the Lord to them, and then the Lord would draw to them Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army. Barak first calls the helper from heaven, and then the Lord calls the enemy upon earth." Nevertheless we cannot subscribe to this explanation, *first* of all because the supposed ellipsis cannot be sustained in this connection, when nothing is said about the blowing of a trumpet either in what precedes or in what follows; and *secondly*, because Num. x. 9 cannot be appealed to in explanation, for the simple reason that it treats of the blowing of the *silver trumpets* on the part of the priests, and they must not be confounded with the *shopharoth*. And the use made of the trumpets at Jericho cannot be transferred to the passage before us without some further ground. We are disposed therefore to take the word מָשַׁךְ in the sense of *draw* (intransitive), *i.e.* proceed one after another in a long-drawn train (as in chap. xx. 37 and Ex. xii. 21), referring to the captain and the warriors drawing after him; whilst in ver. 7 it is to be translated in the same way, though with a transitive signification. Mount Tabor, called Ἰταβύριον by the Greeks (see LXX. Hos. v. 1), the mountain of Christ's transfiguration according to an early tradition of the church, the present Jebel *et Tur*, is a large truncated cone of limestone, which is almost perfectly insulated, and rises to the height of about a thousand feet, on the north-eastern border of the plain of Jezreel. The sides of the mountain are covered with a forest of oaks and wild pistachios,

and upon its flat summit, which is about half an hour in circumference, there are the remains of ancient fortifications (see *Robinson*, Pal. iii. pp. 211 sqq., and *v. Raumer*, Pal. pp. 37, 38). The words "and take with thee 10,000 men" are not to be understood as signifying that Barak was to summon the people together upon the top of Mount Tabor, but the assembling of the people is presupposed; and all that is commanded is, that he was to proceed to Mount Tabor with the assembled army, and make his attack upon the enemy, who were encamped in the valley of Kishon, *from that point*. According to ver. 10, the army was collected at Kedesh in Naphtali. *Nachal Kishon* is not only the brook *Kishon*, which is formed by streams that take their rise from springs upon Tabor and the mountains of Gilboa, flows in a north-westerly direction through the plain of Jezreel to the Mediterranean, and empties itself into the bay of Acca, and which is called *Mukatta* by the natives (see *Rob.* iii. pp. 472 sqq., and *v. Raumer*, pp. 39, 50), but the valley on both sides of the brook, *i.e.* the plain of Jezreel (see at Josh. xvii. 16), where the greatest battles have been fought for the possession of Palestine from time immemorial down to the most recent times (see *v. Raumer*, pp. 40 sqq.).—Vers. 8 sqq. Barak replied that he would not go unless she would go with him—certainly not for the reason suggested by *Bertheau*, viz. that he distrusted the divine promise given to him by Deborah, but because his mistrust of his own strength was such that he felt too weak to carry out the command of God. He wanted divine enthusiasm for the conflict, and this the presence of the prophetess was to infuse into both Barak and the army that was to be gathered round him. Deborah promised to accompany him, but announced to him as the punishment for this want of confidence in the success of his undertaking, that the prize of victory—namely, the defeat of the hostile general—should be taken out of his hand; for Jehovah would sell (*i.e.* deliver up) Sisera into the hand of a woman, viz., according to vers. 17 sqq., into the hand of Jael. She then went with him to Kedesh, where Barak summoned together Zebulun and Naphtali, *i.e.* the fighting men of those tribes, and went up with 10,000 men in his train ("at his feet," *i.e.* after him, ver. 14; cf. Ex. xi. 8 and Deut. xi. 6) to Tabor ("went up:" the expression is used here to denote the advance of an army against a place). Kedesh, where the army assembled, was higher than Tabor. זעק, *Hiphil* with acc., to call together (cf. 2 Sam. xx. 4, 5). Before the engagement with the foe is described, there follows in ver. 11 a statement that

*Heber* the Kenite had separated himself from his tribe, the children of Hobab, who led a nomad life in the desert of Judah (chap. i. 16), and had pitched his tents as far as the oak forest at Zaanannim (see at Josh. xix. 33) near Kedesh. This is introduced because of its importance in relation to the issue of the conflict which ensued (vers. 17 sqq.). נִפְרָד with *Kametz* is a participle, which is used in the place of the perfect, to indicate that the separation was a permanent one.

Vers. 12–16. As soon as Sisera received tidings of the march of Barak to Mount Tabor, he brought together all his chariots and all his men of war from Harosheth of the Goyim into the brook-valley of the Kishon. Then Deborah said to Barak, "*Up; for this is the day in which Jehovah hath given Sisera into thy hand. Yea* (הֲלֹא, *nonne*, as an expression indicating lively assurance), *the Lord goeth out before thee*," *sc.* to the battle, to smite the foe; whereupon Barak went down from Tabor with his 10,000 men to attack the enemy, according to chap. v. 19, at Taanach by the water of Megiddo. —Ver. 15. "*And the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his army, with the edge of the sword before Barak.*" וַיְהָם, as in Ex. xiv. 24 and Josh. x. 10, denotes the confounding of the hostile army by a miracle of God, mostly by some miraculous phenomenon of nature: see, besides Ex. xiv. 24, 2 Sam. xxii. 15, Ps. xviii. 15, and cxliv. 6. The expression וַיְהָם places the defeat of Sisera and his army in the same category as the miraculous destruction of Pharaoh and of the Canaanites at Gibeon; and the combination of this verb with the expression "with the edge of the sword" is to be taken as *constructio prægnans*, in this sense: Jehovah threw Sisera and his army into confusion, and, like a terrible champion fighting in front of Israel, smote him without quarter. Sisera sprang from his chariot to save himself, and fled on foot; but Barak pursued the routed foe to Harosheth, and completely destroyed them. "*All Sisera's army fell by the edge of the sword; there remained not even to one*," *i.e.* not a single man.

Vers. 17–22. Sisera took refuge in the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, to escape the sword of the Israelites, as king Jabin lived at peace with the house of Heber, *i.e.* with this branch of the Kenites.—Ver. 18. Jael received the fugitive into her tent in the usual form of oriental hospitality (סוּר, as in Gen. xix. 2, 3, to turn aside from the road and approach a person), and covered him with a covering (שְׂמִיכָה, ἅπ λεγ., covering, or rug), that he might be able to sleep, as he was thoroughly exhausted with his

flight.—Ver. 19. On his asking for water to drink, as he was thirsty (צָמֵתִי, defective form for צָמֵאתִי), she handed him milk from her bottle, and covered him up again. She gave him milk instead of water, as Deborah emphatically mentions in her song in chap. v. 25, no doubt merely for the purpose of giving to her guest a friendly and hospitable reception. When *Josephus* affirms, in his account of this event (Ant. v. 5, 4), that she gave him milk that was already spoiled (διεφθορὸς ἤδη), *i.e.* had turned sour, and *R. Tanchum* supposes that such milk intoxicated the weary man, these are merely later decorations of the simple fact, and have no historical worth whatever.—Ver. 20. In order to be quite sure, Sisera entreated his hostess to stand before the door and turn any one away who might come to her to seek for one of the fugitives. עֲמֹד is the imperative for עִמְדִי, as the syntax proves that the word cannot be an infinitive. The anomaly apparent in the use of the gender may be accounted for on the ground that the masculine was the more general form, and might therefore be used for the more definite feminine. There are not sufficient grounds for altering it into עָמוֹד, the *inf. abs.* Whether Jael complied with this wish is not stated; but in the place of anything further, the chief fact alone is given in ver. 21, namely, that Jael took a tent-plug, and went with a hammer in her hand to Sisera, who had fallen through exhaustion into a deep sleep, and drove the plug into his temples, so that it penetrated into the earth, or the floor. The words וְהוּא־נִרְדַּם וַיָּעַף are introduced as explanatory of the course of the events: "*but he was fallen into a deep sleep, and exhausted,*" *i.e.* had fallen fast asleep through exhaustion. "*And so he died.*" וַיָּמֹת is attached as a consequence to וַתִּתְקַע . . . וַתִּצְנַח וגו׳, whereas וַיָּעַף belongs to the parenthetical clause וְהוּא נִרְדַּם. This is the explanation adopted by *Rosenmüller*, and also in the remark of *Kimchi*: "the words נִרְדַּם וַיָּעַף indicate the reason why Sisera neither heard Jael approach him, nor was conscious of the blow inflicted upon him." For the combination of וַיָּעַף with וַיָּמֹת, "then he became exhausted and died," which *Stud.* and *Bertheau* support, does not give any intelligible thought at all. A man who has a tent-peg driven with a hammer into his temples, so that the peg passes through his head into the ground, does not become exhausted before he dies, but dies instantaneously. And וַיָּעַף, from עוּף, equivalent to עָיֵף (Jer. iv. 31), or יָעַף, and written with *Patach* in the last syllable, to distinguish it from עוּף, *volare*, has no other meaning than to be exhausted, in any of the passages in which it occurs (see 1 Sam. xiv. 28, 31; 2 Sam. xxi. 15). The

rendering adopted by the LXX., ἐσκοτώθη, cannot be grammatically sustained.—Ver. 22. When Barak, who was in pursuit of Sisera, arrived at Jael's tent, she went to meet him, to show him the deed which she had performed. Thus was Deborah's prediction to Barak (ver. 9) fulfilled. The Lord had sold Sisera into the hand of a woman, and deprived Barak of the glory of the victory. Nevertheless the act itself was not morally justified, either by this prophetic announcement, or by the fact that it is commemorated in the song of Deborah in chap. v. 24 sqq. Even though there can be no doubt that Jael acted under the influence of religious enthusiasm for the cause of Israel and its God, and that she was prompted by religious motives to regard the connection of her tribe with Israel, the people of the Lord, as higher and more sacred, not only than the bond of peace, in which her tribe was living with Jabin the Canaanitish king, but even than the duties of hospitality, which are so universally sacred to an oriental mind, her heroic deed cannot be acquitted of the sins of lying, treachery, and assassination, which were associated with it, by assuming, as *Calovius*, *Buddeus*, and others have done, that when Jael invited Sisera into her tent, and promised him safety, and quenched his thirst with milk, she was acting with perfect sincerity, and without any thought of killing him, and that it was not till after he was fast asleep that she was instigated and impelled *instinctu Dei arcano* to perform the deed. For Jehovah, the God of Israel, not only abhors lying lips (Prov. xii. 22), but hates wickedness and deception of every kind. It is true, He punishes the ungodly at the hand of sinners; but the sinners whom He employs as the instruments of His penal justice in carrying out the plans of His kingdom, are not instigated to the performance of wicked deeds by an inward and secret impulse from Him. God had no doubt so ordered it, that Sisera should meet with his death in Jael's tent, where he had taken refuge; but this divine purpose did not justify Jael in giving to the enemy of Israel a hospitable reception into her tent, making him feel secure both by word and deed, and then murdering him secretly while he was asleep. Such conduct as that was not the operation of the Spirit of God, but the fruit of a heroism inspired by flesh and blood; and even in Deborah's song (chap. v. 24 sqq.) it is not lauded as a divine act.

Vers. 23, 24. "*So God subdued at that time Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel; and the hand of the Israelites became heavier and heavier in its pressure upon him, until they had*

*destroyed him.*" וַתֵּלֶךְ יָד . . . הָלוֹךְ וְקָשֶׁה, "the hand . . . increased more and more, becoming heavy." הָלַךְ, used to denote the progress or continual increase of an affair, as in Gen. viii. 3, etc., is connected with the infinitive absolute, and with the participle of the action concerned. קָשֶׁה is the feminine participle of קָשֶׁה, like גָּדֵל in Gen. xxvi. 13 (see *Ges.* § 131, 3, Anm. 3). The overthrow of Jabin and his rule did not involve the extermination of the Canaanites generally.

*Deborah's Song of Victory.*—Chap. v.

This highly poetical song is so direct and lively an utterance of the mighty force of the enthusiasm awakened by the exaltation of Israel, and its victory over Sisera, that its genuineness is generally admitted now. After a general summons to praise the Lord for the courage with which the people rose up to fight against their foes (ver. 2), Deborah the singer dilates in the first section (vers. 3–11) upon the significance of the victory, picturing in lively colours (1) the glorious time when Israel was exalted to be the nation of the Lord (vers. 3–5); (2) the disgraceful decline of the nation in the more recent times (vers. 6–8); and (3) the joyful turn of affairs which followed her appearance (vers. 9–11). After a fresh summons to rejoice in their victory (ver. 12), there follows in the *second* section (vers. 13–21) a lively picture of the conflict and victory, in which there is a vivid description (*a*) of the mighty gathering of the brave to battle (vers. 13–15*a*); (*b*) of the cowardice of those who stayed away from the battle, and of the bravery with which the braver warriors risked their lives in the battle (vers. 15*b*–18); and (*c*) of the successful result of the conflict (vers. 19–21). To this there is appended in the *third* section (vers. 22–31) an account of the glorious issue of the battle and the victory: first of all, a brief notice of the flight and pursuit of the foe (vers. 22–24); secondly, a commemoration of the slaying of Sisera by Jael (vers. 24–27); and thirdly, a scornful description of the disappointment of Sisera's mother, who was counting upon a large arrival of booty (vers. 28–30). The song then closes with the hope, founded upon this victory, that all the enemies of the Lord might perish, and Israel increase in strength (ver. 31*a*). The whole song, therefore, is divided into three leading sections, each of which again is arranged in three somewhat unequal strophes, the first and second sections being introduced by a summons to the praise of God (vers. 2, 12), whilst the third closes with an expression of hope, drawn

from the contents of the whole, with regard to the future prospects of the kingdom of God (ver. 31*a*).

Ver. 1. The historical introduction ("*Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam on that day, saying*") takes the place of a heading, and does not mean that the song of Deborah and Barak which follows was composed by them jointly, but simply that it was sung by them together, in commemoration of the victory. The poetess or writer of the song, according to vers. 3, 7, and 12, was Deborah. The song itself opens with a summons to praise the Lord for the willing and joyful rising up of His people.

Ver. 2. *That the strong in Israel showed themselves strong,*
*That the people willingly offered themselves,*
*Praise ye the Lord!*

The meaning of פָּרַע and פְּרָעוֹת is a subject of dispute. According to the Septuagint rendering, and that of *Theodot.*, ἐν τῷ ἄρξασθαι ἀρχηγοὺς ἐν Ἰσραήλ, many give it the meaning to begin or to lead, and endeavour to establish this meaning from an Arabic word signifying to find one's self at the head of an affair. But this meaning cannot be established in Hebrew. פָּרַע has no other meaning than to let loose from something, to let a person loose or free (see at Lev. x. 6); and in the only other passage where פְּרָעוֹת occurs (Deut. xxxii. 42), it does not refer to a leader, but to the luxuriant growth of the hair as the sign of great strength. Hence in this passage also פְּרָעוֹת literally means *comati*, the hairy ones, *i.e.* those who possessed strength; and פָּרַע, to manifest or put forth strength. The persons referred to are the champions in the fight, who went before the nation with strength and bravery. The preposition ב before פָּרֹעַ indicates the reason for praising God, or rather the object with which the praise of the Lord was connected. בְּפָרֹעַ וגו׳, literally "in the showing themselves strong." The meaning is, "for the fact that the strong in Israel put forth strength." הִתְנַדֵּב, to prove one's self willing, here to go into the battle of their own free will, without any outward and authoritative command. This introduction transports us in the most striking manner into the time of the judges, when Israel had no king who could summon the nation to war, but everything depended upon the voluntary rising of the strong and the will of the nation at large. The manifestation of this strength and willingness Deborah praises as a gracious gift of the Lord. After this summons to praise the Lord, the first part of the song opens with an appeal to the kings and princes of the earth to hear what Deborah has to proclaim to the praise of God.

Ver. 3. Hear, ye kings; give ear, ye princes!
I, to the Lord will I sing,
Will sing praise to the Lord, the God of Israel.
4. Lord, when Thou wentest out from Seir,
When Thou marchedst out of the fields of Edom,
The earth trembled, and the heavens also dropped;
The clouds also dropped water.
5. The mountains shook before the Lord,
Sinai there before the Lord, the God of Israel.

The "kings and princes" are not the rulers in Israel, for Israel had no kings at that time, but the kings and princes of the heathen nations, as in Ps. ii. 2. These were to discern the mighty acts of Jehovah in Israel, and learn to fear Jehovah as the almighty God. For the song to be sung applies to Him, the God of Israel. זָמַר, ψάλλειν, is the technical expression for singing with an instrumental accompaniment (see at Ex. xv. 2).—Vers. 4, 5. To give the Lord the glory for the victory which had been gained through His omnipotent help over the powerful army of Sisera, and to fill the heathen with fear of Jehovah, and the Israelites with love and confidence towards Him, the singer reverts to the terribly glorious manifestation of Jehovah in the olden time, when Israel was accepted as the nation of God (Ex. xix.). Just as Moses in his blessing (Deut. xxxiii. 2) referred the tribes of Israel to this mighty act, as the source of all salvation and blessing for Israel, so the prophetess Deborah makes the praise of this glorious manifestation of God the starting-point of her praise of the great grace, which Jehovah as the faithful covenant God had displayed to His people in her own days. The tacit allusion to Moses' blessing is very unmistakeable. But whereas Moses describes the descent of the Lord upon Sinai (Ex. xix.), according to its gracious significance in relation to the tribes of Israel, as an objective fact (Jehovah came from Sinai, Deut. xxxiii. 2), Deborah clothes the remembrance of it in the form of an address to God, to bring out the thought that the help which Israel had just experienced was a renewal of the coming of the Lord to His people. Jehovah's going out of Seir, and marching out of the fields of Edom, is to be interpreted in the same sense as His rising up from Seir (Deut. xxxiii. 2). As the descent of the Lord upon Sinai is depicted there as a rising of the sun from the east, so the same descent in a black cloud amidst thunder, lightning, fire, and vapour of smoke (Ex. xix. 16, 18), is represented here with direct allusion to these phenomena as a storm rising up from Seir in the east, in which the Lord

advanced to meet His people as they came from the west to Sinai. Before the Lord, who came down upon Sinai in the storm and darkness of the cloud, the earth shook and the heaven dropped, or, as it is afterwards more definitely explained, the clouds dropped with water, emptied themselves of their abundance of water as they do in the case of a storm. The mountains shook (נָזְלוּ, *Niphal* of זָלַל, dropping the reduplication of the ל = נָזֹלּוּ, Isa. lxiii. 19, lxiv. 2), even the strong rocky mountain of Sinai, which stood out so distinctly before the eyes of the singer, that she speaks of it as "this Sinai," pointing to it as though it were locally near. David's description of the miraculous guidance of Israel through the desert in Ps. lxviii. 8, 9, is evidently founded upon this passage, though it by no means follows from this that the passage before us also treats of the journey through the desert, as *Clericus* supposes, or even of the presence of the Lord in the battle with Sisera, and the victory which it secured. But greatly as Israel had been exalted at Sinai by the Lord its God, it had fallen just as deeply into bondage to its oppressors through its own sins, until Deborah arose to help it (vers. 6–8).

Ver. 6. In the days of Shamgar, the son of Anath,
In the days of Jael, the paths kept holiday,
And the wanderers of the paths went crooked ways.
7. The towns in Israel kept holiday, they kept holiday,
Until that I, Deborah, arose,
That I arose a mother in Israel.
8. They chose new gods;
Then was war at the gates:
Was there a shield seen and a spear
Among forty thousand in Israel?

The deep degradation and disgrace into which Israel had sunk before the appearance of Deborah, through its falling away from the Lord into idolatry, forms the dark reverse of that glorification at Sinai. Although, after Ehud, Shamgar had also brought help to the people against their enemies by a victory over the Philistines (chap. iii. 31), and although Jael, who proved herself a heroine by slaying the fugitive Sisera, was then alive, things had got to such a pitch with Israel, that no one would venture upon the public high roads. There are no good grounds for the conjecture that Jael was a different person from the Jael mentioned in chap. iv. 17 sqq., whether a judge who is not further known, as *Ewald* supposes, or a female judge who stood at the head of the nation in these unhappy times (*Bertheau*). חָדְלוּ אֹרְחוֹת, *lit.* "*the paths ceased*," *sc.*

to be paths, or to be trodden by men. הֹלְכֵי נְתִיבוֹת, "*those who went upon paths*," or beaten ways, *i.e.* those who were obliged to undertake journeys for the purpose of friendly intercourse or trade, notwithstanding the burden of foreign rule which pressed upon the land; such persons went by "*twisted paths*," *i.e.* by roads and circuitous routes which turned away from the high roads. And the פָּרָזוֹן, *i.e.* the *cultivated land*, with its open towns and villages, and with their inhabitants, was as forsaken and desolate as the public highways. The word *perazon* has been rendered judge or guidance by modern expositors, after the example of *Teller* and *Gesenius;* and in ver. 11 decision or guidance. But this meaning, which has been adopted into all the more recent lexicons, has nothing really to support it, and does not even suit our verse, into which it would introduce the strange contradiction, that at the time when Shamgar and Jael were judges, there were no judges in Israel. In addition to the Septuagint version, which renders the word δυνατοὶ in this verse (*i.e.* according to the *Cod. Vat.*, for the *Cod. Al.* has φράζων), and then in the most unmeaning way adopts the rendering αὔξησον in ver. 11, from which we may clearly see that the translators did not know the meaning of the word, it is common to adduce an Arabic word which signifies *segregavit, discrevit rem ab aliis*, though it is impossible to prove that the Arabic word ever had the meaning to judge or to lead. All the old translators, as well as the Rabbins, have based their rendering of the word upon פָּרְזִי, inhabitant of the flat country (Deut. iii. 5, and 1 Sam. vi. 18), and פְּרָזוֹת, the open flat country, as distinguished from the towns surrounded by walls (Ezek. xxxviii. 11; Zech. ii. 8), according to which פָּרָזוֹן, as the place of meeting, would denote both the cultivated land with its unenclosed towns and villages, and also the population that was settled in the open country in unfortified places,—a meaning which also lies at the foundation of the word in Hab. iii. 14. Accordingly, *Luther* has rendered the word *Bauern* (peasants). עַד שַׁקַּמְתִּי for עַד אֲשֶׁר קַמְתִּי. The contraction of אֲשֶׁר into שׁ, with *Dagesh* following, and generally pointed with *Seghol*, but here with *Patach* on account of the ק, which is closely related to the gutturals, belongs to the popular character of the song, and is therefore also found in the Song of Solomon (chap. i. 12, ii. 7, 17, iv. 6). It is also met with here and there in simple prose (Judg. vi. 17, vii. 12, viii. 26); but it was only in the literature of the time of the captivity and a still later date, that it found its way more and more from the language of ordinary conversation into

that of the Scriptures. Deborah describes herself as "a mother in Israel," on account of her having watched over her people with maternal care, just as Job calls himself a father to the poor who had been supported by him (Job xxix. 16; cf. Isa. xxii. 21).—Ver. 8 describes the cause of the misery into which Israel had fallen. אֱלֹהִים חֲדָשִׁים is the object to יִבְחַר, and the subject is to be found in the previous term *Israel*. Israel forsook its God and Creator, and chose new gods, *i.e.* gods not worshipped by its fathers (*vid.* Deut. xxxii. 17). Then there was war (לָחֶם, the construct state of לֶחֶם, a verbal noun formed from the *Piel*, and signifying conflict or war) at the gates; *i.e.* the enemy pressed up to the very gates of the Israelitish towns, and besieged them, and there was not seen a shield or spear among forty thousand in Israel, *i.e.* there were no warriors found in Israel who ventured to defend the land against the foe. אִם indicates a question with a negative reply assumed, as in 1 Kings i. 27, etc. Shield and spear (or lance) are mentioned particularly as arms of offence and defence, to signify arms of all kinds. The words are not to be explained from 1 Sam. xiii. 22, as signifying that there were no longer any weapons to be found among the Israelites, because the enemy had taken them away ("not seen" is not equivalent to "not found" in 1 Sam. xiii. 22); they simply affirm that there were no longer any weapons to be seen, because not one of the 40,000 men in Israel took a weapon in his hand. The number 40,000 is not the number of the men who offered themselves willingly for battle, according to ver. 2 (*Bertheau*); for apart from the fact that they did not go unarmed into the battle, it is at variance with the statement in chap. iv. 6, 10, that Barak went into the war and smote the enemy with only 10,000 men. It is a round number, *i.e.* an approximative statement of the number of the warriors who might have smitten the enemy and delivered Israel from bondage, and was probably chosen with a reference to the 40,000 fighting men of the tribes on the east of the Jordan, who went with Joshua to Canaan and helped their brethren to conquer the land (Josh. iv. 13). Most of the more recent expositors have given a different rendering of ver. 8. Many of them render the first clause according to the *Peshito* and *Vulgate*, "*God chose something new*," taking *Elohim* as the subject, and *chadashim* (new) as the object. But to this it has very properly been objected, that, according to the terms of the song, it was not *Elohim* but *Jehovah* who effected the deliverance of Israel, and that the Hebrew for new things is not חֲדָשִׁים, but חֲדָשׁוֹת (Isa. xlii.

9, xlviii. 6), or חֲדָשָׁה (Isa. xliii. 19; Jer. xxxi. 22). On these grounds *Ewald* and *Bertheau* render *Elohim* "judges" (they chose new judges), and appeal to Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7, 8, where the authorities who administered justice in the name of God are called *Elohim*. But these passages are not sufficient by themselves to establish the meaning "judges," and still less to establish the rendering "new judges" for *Elohim chadashim*. Moreover, according to both these explanations, the next clause must be understood as relating to the specially courageous conflict which the Israelites in their enthusiasm carried on with Sisera; whereas the further statement, that among 40,000 warriors who offered themselves willingly for battle there was not a shield or a lance to be seen, is irreconcilably at variance with this. For the explanation suggested, namely, that these warriors did not possess the ordinary weapons for a well-conducted engagement, but had nothing but bows and swords, or instead of weapons of any kind had only the staffs and tools of shepherds and husbandmen, is proved to be untenable by the simple fact that there is nothing at all to indicate any contrast between ordinary and extraordinary weapons, and that such a contrast is altogether foreign to the context. Moreover, the fact appealed to, that אָז points to a victorious conflict in vers. 13, 19, 22, as well as in ver. 11, is not strong enough to support the view in question, as אָז is employed in ver. 19 in connection with the battle of the kings of Canaan, which was not a successful one, but terminated in a defeat.

The singer now turns from the contemplation of the deep degradation of Israel to the glorious change which took place as soon as she appeared:—

Ver. 9. My heart inclines to the leaders of Israel;
To those who offered themselves willingly in the nation. Praise ye the Lord!
10. Ye that ride upon white asses;
Ye that sit upon coverings,
And that walk in the way, reflect!
11. With the voice of the archers among drawers (of water),
There praise ye the righteous acts of the Lord,
The righteous acts in His villages in Israel.
Then the people of the Lord went down to the gates!

We must supply the *subst. verb* in connection with לִבִּי לְ, "*My heart is* (*sc.* inclined) *towards the leaders of Israel*," *i.e.* feels itself drawn towards them. חוֹקֵק for מְחוֹקֵק (ver. 14), the determining one, *i.e.* the commander or leader in war: as in Deut. xxxiii. 21. The

leaders and willing ones are first of all to praise the Lord for having crowned their willingness with victory.—Ver. 10. And all classes of the people, both high and low, have reason to join in the praise. Those who ride upon white, *i.e.* white-spotted asses, are the upper classes generally, and not merely the leaders (cf. chap. x. 4, xii. 14). צָהֹר, *lit.* dazzling white; but since there are no asses that are perfectly white, and white was a colour that was highly valued both by Hebrews and Arabs, they applied the term white to those that were only spotted with white. Those who sit upon coverings (מְדִין from מָד, a covering or carpet, with the plural termination ין, which is to be regarded as a poetical Chaldaism) are the rich and prosperous; and those who walk on the way, *i.e.* travellers on foot, represent the middle and lower classes, who have to go about and attend to their affairs. Considered logically, this triple division of the nation is not a very exact one, as the first two do not form a true antithesis. But the want of exactness does not warrant our fusing together the middle term and the first, and understanding by *middin* either saddles or saddle-cloths, as *Ewald* and *Bertheau* have done; for saddle-cloths are still further from forming an antithesis to asses, so that those who ride upon white asses could be distinguished, as the upper classes and leaders, from those who sit upon saddles, or are "somewhat richer." Moreover, there is no reason for regarding these three classes as referring simply to the long line of warriors hastening from the victory to the triumphal fête. On the contrary, all classes of the people are addressed, as enjoying the fruits of the victory that had been obtained: the upper classes, who ride upon their costly animals; the rich resting at home upon their splendid carpets; and the poor travellers, who can now go quietly along the high-road again without fear of interruption from the foe (ver. 6). שִׂיחוּ is rendered "*sing*" by many; but this rendering cannot be sustained from Ps. cv. 2 and cxlv. 5, and it is not necessary in the verse before us, since the well-established meaning of the word "ponder," reflect, *sc.* upon the acts of the Lord, is a perfectly suitable one.—Ver. 11. The whole nation had good reason to make this reflection, as the warriors, having returned home, were now relating the mighty acts of the Lord among the women who were watering their flocks, and the people had returned to their towns once more. This is in all probability the idea of the obscure verse before us, which has been interpreted in such very different ways. The first clause, which has no verb, and cannot constitute a sentence by itself, must be connected with the following clause, and taken as an *anakolouthon*,

as שָׁם יִתְּנוּ does not form a direct continuation of the clause commencing with מִקּוֹל. After the words "*from the voice of the archers*," we should expect the continuation "*there is heard*," or "there sounds forth the praise of the acts of the Lord." Instead of that, the construction that was commenced is relinquished at שָׁם יִתְּנוּ, and a different turn is given to the thought. This not only seems to offer the simplest explanation, but the only possible solution of the difficulty. For the explanation that מִן is to be taken as signifying "away from," as in Num. xv. 24, etc., in the sense of "far from the voice of the archers, among the watering women," does not suit the following word שָׁם, "there," at all. It would be necessary to attribute to מִן the meaning "no more disquieted by," a meaning which the preposition could not possibly have in this clause. מְחַצְּצִים are not sharers in the booty, for חָצַץ simply means to cut, to cut in pieces, to divide, and is never applied to the sharing of booty, for which חָלַק is the word used (*vid.* ver. 30; Ps. lxviii. 13; Isa. ix. 2). מְחַצֵּץ is to be regarded, as the Rabbins maintain, as a *denom.* from חֵץ, to hold an arrow, signifying therefore the shooter of an arrow. It was probably a natural thing for Deborah, who dwelt in Benjamin, to mention the archers as representatives of warriors generally, since this was the principal weapon employed by the Benjaminites (see 1 Chron. viii. 40, xii. 2; 2 Chron. xiv. 7, xvii. 17). The tarrying of the warriors among the drawers of water, where the flocks and herds were being watered, points to the time of peace, when the warriors were again occupied with their civil and domestic affairs. יִתְּנוּ is a simple aorist. תְּנָה, *lit.* to repeat, then to relate, or praise. "*The righteousness of Jehovah*," *i.e.* the marvellous acts of the Lord in and upon Israel for the accomplishing of His purposes of salvation, in which the righteousness of His work upon earth was manifested (cf. 1 Sam. xii. 7, Micah vi. 5). צִדְקוֹת פְּרָזוֹנוֹ has been rendered by modern expositors, either "the righteous acts of His guidance or of His decision" (*Ewald* and *Bertheau*), or "the righteous acts of His commanders," or "the benefits towards His princes (leaders) in Israel" (*Ros.* and others). But neither of these can be sustained. We must take פְּרָזוֹן here in just the same sense as in ver. 7; the country covered with open towns and villages, together with their inhabitants, whom Jehovah had delivered from the hostile oppression that had rested upon them, by means of the victory obtained over Sisera. After that victory the people of the Lord went down again to their gates, from the mountains and hiding-places in which they had taken refuge from their foes (vers. 6, 7),

returning again to the plains of the land, and the towns that were now delivered from the foe.

Ver. 12 forms the introduction to the second part, viz. the description of the conflict and the victory. Throwing herself into the great event which she is about to commemorate, Deborah calls upon herself to strike up a song, and upon Barak to lead off his prisoners:

Ver. 12. Awake, awake, Deborah!
Awake, awake, utter a song!
Rise up, Barak, and lead captive thy captives, O son of Abinoam!

עוּרִי has the tone upon the last syllable on the first two occasions, to answer to the rapid summoning burst of the Lord in the opening address (*Bertheau*). שָׁבָה שִׁבְיְךָ, to lead away captives, as the fruit of the victory; not merely to lead in triumph. On the form וּשְׁבֵה with *Chateph-patach*, see *Ewald*, § 90, *b*. In the next three strophes of this part (vers. 13–21) the progress of the conflict is described; and in the first two the part taken in the battle by the different tribes (vers. 13–15*a*, and 15*b*–18).

Ver. 13. Then came down a remnant of nobles of the nation;
Jehovah came down to me among the heroes.
14. Of Ephraim, whose root in Amalek;
Behind thee Benjamin among thy peoples.
From Machir came down leaders,
And from Zebulun marchers with the staff of the conductor.
15*a*. And princes in Issachar with Deborah,
And Issachar as well as Barak,
Driven into the valley through his feet.

Looking back to the commencement of the battle, the poetess describes the streaming of the brave men of the nation down from the mountains, to fight the enemy with Barak and Deborah in the valley of Jezreel; though the whole nation did not rise as one man against its oppressors, but only a remnant of the noble and brave in the nation, with whom Jehovah went into the battle. In ver. 13 the Masoretic pointing of יְרַד is connected with the rabbinical idea of the word as the *fut. apoc.* of רָדָה: "*then* (now) *will the remnant rule over the glorious*," *i.e.* the remnant left in Israel over the stately foe; "Jehovah rules for me (or through me) over the heroes in Sisera's army," which *Luther* has also adopted. But, as *Schnurr.* has maintained, this view is decidedly erroneous, inasmuch as it is altogether irreconcilable with the description which follows of the marching of the tribes of Israel into the battle. ירד is to be understood in the

same sense as יָרְדוּ in ver. 14, and to be pointed as a perfect יָרַד.[1] "*There came down*," *sc.* from the mountains of the land into the plain of Jezreel, a remnant of nobles. לְאַדִּירִים is used instead of a closer subordination through the construct state, to bring out the idea of שָׁרִיד into greater prominence (see *Ewald*, § 292). עָם is in apposition to לְאַדִּירִים, and not to be connected with the following word יְהוָה, as it is by some, in opposition to the accents. The thought is rather this: with the nobles or among the brave Jehovah himself went against the foe. לִי is a *dat. commodi*, equivalent to "for my joy."—Ver. 14. "*From* (מִנִּי, poetical for מִן) *Ephraim*," *sc.* there came fighting men; not the whole tribe, but only nobles or brave men, and indeed those whose roots were in Amalek, *i.e.* those who were rooted or had taken root, *i.e.* had settled and spread themselves out upon the tribe-territory of Ephraim, which had formerly been inhabited by Amalekites, the mount of the Amalekites, mentioned in chap. xii. 15 (for the figure itself, see Isa. xxvii. 6, Ps. lxxx. 10, and Job v. 3). "*Behind thee*," *i.e.* behind Ephraim, there followed Benjamin among thy (Ephraim's) people (עַמֶּמִים, a poetical form for עַמִּים, in the sense of hosts). Benjamin lived farther south than Ephraim, and therefore, when looked at from the stand-point of the plain of Jezreel, behind Ephraim; "but he came upon the scene of battle, either in subordination to the more powerful Ephraimites, or rushing on with the Ephraimitish hosts" (*Bertheau*). "*From Machir*," *i.e.* from western Manasseh, there came down leaders (see at ver. 9), *sc.* with warriors in their train. *Machir* cannot refer to the Manassite family of Machir, to which Moses gave the northern part of Gilead, and Bashan, for an inheritance (comp. Josh. xvii. 1 with xiii. 29–31), but it stands poetically for Manasseh generally, as Machir was the only son of Manasseh, from whom all the Manassites were descended (Gen. l. 23; Num. xxvi. 29 sqq., xxvii. 1). The reference here, however, is simply to that portion of the tribe of Manasseh which had received its inheritance by the side of Ephraim, in the land to the west of the Jordan. This explanation of the word is required, not only by the fact that Machir is mentioned after Ephraim and Benjamin, and

[1] The *Cod. Al.* of the LXX. contains the correct rendering, τότε κατέβη κατάλειμμα. In the Targum also ירד is correctly translated נחת, *descendit*, although the germs of the rabbinical interpretation are contained in the paraphrase of the whole verse: *tunc descendit unus ex exercitu Israel et fregit fortitudinem fortium gentium. Ecce non ex fortitudine manus eorum fuit hoc; sed Dominus fregit ante populum suum fortitudinem virorum osorum eorum.*

before Zebulun and Issachar, but still more decidedly by the introduction of Gilead beyond Jordan in connection with Reuben, in ver. 17, which can only signify Gad and eastern Manasseh. Hence the two names *Machir* and *Gilead*, the names of Manasseh's son and grandson, are poetically employed to denote the two halves of the tribe of Manasseh; Machir signifying the western Manassites, and Gilead the eastern. "*From Zebulun marchers* (מָשְׁכִי, to approach in long processions, as in chap. iv. 6) *with the staff of the conductor.*" סֹפֵר, writer or numberer, was the technical name given to the musterer-general, whose duty it was to levy and muster the troops (2 Kings xxv. 19; cf. 2 Chron. xxvi. 11); here it denotes the military leader generally.—Ver. 15*a*. שָׂרַי, "*my princes*," does not furnish any appropriate meaning, as neither Deborah nor Barak was of the tribe of Issachar, and it is not stated anywhere that the Issacharites gathered round Deborah as their leader. The reading שָׂרֵי (*stat. constr.*), adopted by the old versions, must be taken as the correct one, and the introduction of the preposition בְּ does not preclude this (compare הָרֵי בְגִלְבֹּעַ, 2 Sam. i. 21, and *Ewald*, § 289, *b*.). עִם, which is used to denote an outward equality, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 42, and is substantially the same as the כֵּן which follows ("*just as*"), is construed without בְּ in the first clause, as in Ps. xlviii. 6. בָּעֵמֶק: into the valley of Jezreel, the plain of Kishon. שֻׁלַּח בְּרַגְלָיו, as in Job xviii. 8, to be sent off, *i.e.* incessantly impelled, through his feet; here it is applied to an irresistible force of enthusiasm for the battle. The nominative to שֻׁלַּח is Issachar and Barak.

Ver. 15*b*. At the brooks of Reuben were great resolutions of heart.
16. Why remainest thou between the hurdles,
To hear the piping of the flocks?
At the brooks of Reuben were great projects of heart.
17. Gilead rests on the other side of the Jordan;
And Dan . . . why tarries he by ships?
Asher sits on the shore of the sea,
And by his bays he reposes.
18. Zebulun, a people that despises its soul even to death,
And Naphtali upon the heights of the field.

In this strophe Deborah first of all mentions the tribes which took no part in the conflict (vers. 15*b*–17), and then returns in ver. 18 to the Zebulunites, who staked their life along with Naphtali for the deliverance of Israel from the yoke of the enemy. The enumeration of the tribes who remained at a distance from the conflict commences with Reuben (vers. 15*b* and 16). In this tribe there did arise a lively sympathy with the national elevation. They held

meetings, passed great resolutions, but it led to no practical result; and at length they preferred to remain quietly at home in their own comfortable pastoral life. The meaning brooks for פְּלַגּוֹת is well established by Job xx. 17, and there is no reason whatever for explaining the word as equivalent to פְּלֻגּוֹת, מִפְלַגּוֹת, divisions (2 Chron. xxxv. 5, 12; Ezra vi. 18). The territory of Reuben, which was celebrated for its splendid pastures, must have abounded in brooks. The question, Why satest thou, or remainedst thou sitting between the hurdles? *i.e.* in the comfortable repose of a shepherd's life, is an utterance of amazement; and the irony is very apparent in the next clause, to hear the bleating of the flocks, *i.e.* the piping of the shepherds, instead of the blast of the war-trumpets.—Ver. 17. Gilead, Dan, and Asher took no part at all. By *Gilead*, the tribes of Gad and half Manasseh are intended. The use of the term הַגִּלְעָד to denote the whole of the territory of the Israelites on the east of the Jordan probably gave occasion to this, although גִּלְעָד (without the article) does not refer to the land even here, but refers primarily to the grandson of Manasseh, as the representative of his family which dwelt in Gilead. (For further remarks, see at ver. 14.) Dan also did not let the national movement disturb it in its earthly trade and commerce. גּוּר, to keep one's self in a place, is construed here with the accusative of the place, as in Ps. cxx. 5. The territory of Dan included the port of Joppa (see at Josh. xix. 46), where the Danites probably carried on a trade with the Phœnicians. Asher also in his land upon the coast did not allow himself to be disturbed from his rest, to join in the common war of its nation. חוֹף יַמִּים is used, as in Gen. xlix. 13, for the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. מִפְרָצִים, *áπ. λεγ.*, literally a rent, and hence applied to a bay, as an incision made in the sea-shore.—Ver. 18. Zebulun and Naphtali acted quite differently. Zebulun showed itself as a people that despised its life even to death, *i.e.* that sacrificed its life for the deliverance of its fatherland. Naphtali did the same in its mountain home. The two tribes had raised 10,000 fighting men at Barak's call (chap. iv. 10), who constituted at any rate the kernel of the Israelitish army.

If we run over the tribes enumerated, it seems strange that the tribes of Judah and Simeon are not mentioned either among those who joined in the battle, or among those who stayed away. The only way in which this can be explained is on the supposition that these two tribes were never summoned by Barak, either because they were so involved in conflict with the Philistines, that they

were unable to render any assistance to the northern tribes against their Canaanitish oppressors, as we might infer from chap. iii. 31, or because of some inward disagreement between these tribes and the rest. But even apart from Judah and Simeon, the want of sympathy on the part of the tribes that are reproved is a sufficient proof that the enthusiasm for the cause of the Lord had greatly diminished in the nation, and that the internal unity of the congregation was considerably loosened.

In the next strophe the battle and the victory are described:—

Ver. 19. Kings came, . . . they fought;
The kings of Canaan fought
At Taanach, at the waters of Megiddo.
A piece of silver they did not take.
20. From heaven they fought,
The stars from their courses fought against Sisera.
21. The brook of Kishon swept them away,
The brook of the olden time, the brook Kishon.
Go on, my soul, in strength!

The advance of the foe is described in few words. Kings came on and fought. They were the kings of Canaan, since Jabin, like his ancestor (Josh. xi. 1 sqq.), had formed an alliance with other kings of northern Canaan, who went to the battle under the command of Sisera. The battle took place at Taanach (see at Josh. xii. 21), by the water of Megiddo, the present Lejun (see at Josh. xii. 21), *i.e.* by the brook Kishon (cf. chap. iv. 7). Taanach and Megiddo were not quite five miles apart, and beside and between them there were several brooks which ran into the southern arm of the Kishon, that flowed through the plain to the north of both these towns. The hostile kings went into the battle with the hope of slaying the Israelites and making a rich capture of booty. But their hopes were disappointed. They could not take with them a piece of silver as booty. בֶּצַע, which generally signifies booty or gain, is probably to be taken here in its primary sense of *frustum*, from בָּצַע, to cut off or cut in pieces, a "piece of silver," equivalent to a single piece of valuable booty.—Ver. 20. For not only did the Israelites fight against them, but the powers of heaven also. "*From heaven*" is more minutely defined by "*the stars from their courses.*" These words explain the statement in chap. iv. 15, "the Lord discomfited Sisera;" though in our opinion not so clearly as to enable us to define more precisely the natural phenomenon by which God threw the enemy into confusion. In all probability we have to think of a terrible storm, with thunder and lightning and hail, or

the sudden bursting of a cloud, which is poetically described as though the stars of heaven had left their courses to fight for the Lord and His kingdom upon earth.—Ver. 21. The kings of Canaan could do nothing against these powers. They were smitten; the brook Kishon washed them (*i.e.* their corpses) away. The meaning "to wash away" is well established by the dialects and the context, though the verb itself only occurs here. As the battle was fought between Taanach and Megiddo, *i.e.* to the south of the brook Kishon, and the smitten foe fled towards the north, many of them met with their death in the waves of the brook, which was flowing over its banks at the time. The brook is called נַחַל קְדוּמִים, *i.e.* the brook of the old world or the olden time (according to the LXX. *Cod. Vat.* χειμάῤῥους ἀρχαίων), as the stream that had been flowing from time immemorial, and not, as the Chaldee interprets it, the stream that had been celebrated from olden time on account of the mighty acts that had been performed there. The meaning suggested by *Ewald* and others, "brook of attacks, or slaughters," is not well sustained, although קֶדֶם is sometimes used to denote a hostile encounter. The last clause interrupts the description of the slaughter and the victory. Borne away by the might of the acts to be commemorated, Deborah stimulates her soul, *i.e.* herself, to a vigorous continuation of her song. תִּדְרְכִי is jussive, and עֹז an accusative governed by the verb, in strength, vigorously; for she had still to celebrate the glorious results of the victory. This is done in the third part of the song (vers. 22–31), the first strophe of which (vers. 22–24) describes in brief drastic traits the flight of the foe, and the treatment of the fugitives by the people of the land.

Ver. 22. Then did the hoofs of the horses stamp
With the hunting, the hunting of his strong ones.
23. Curse ye Meroz, saith the angel of the Lord;
Curse ye, curse ye the inhabitants thereof!
Because they came not to the help of Jehovah,
To the help of Jehovah among the mighty.
24. Blessed before women be Jael,
The wife of Heber the Kenite,
Blessed before women in the tent!

The war-chariots of the enemy hunted away in the wildest flight (ver. 22). The horses stamped the ground with the continuous hunting or galloping away of the warriors. דַּהֲרוֹת, the hunting (cf. דָּהַר, Nah. iii. 2). The repetition of the word expresses the continuance or incessant duration of the same thing (see *Ewald*, § 313, *a.*). אַבִּירִים, strong ones, are not the horses, but the warriors

in the war-chariots. The suffix refers to סוּס, which is used collectively. The mighty ones on horses are not, however, merely the Canaanitish princes, such as Sisera, as *Ewald* maintains, but the warriors generally who hunted away upon their war-chariots.—Ver. 23. The enemy, or at all events Sisera, might have been destroyed in his flight by the inhabitants of Meroz; but they did not come to the help of the Israelites, and brought down the curse of God upon themselves in consequence. That this is the thought of ver. 23 is evident from the context, and more especially from the blessing pronounced upon Jael in ver. 24. The situation of Meroz, which is not mentioned again, cannot be determined with certainty. *Wilson* and *v. Raumer* imagine that it may be *Kefr Musr* on the south of Tabor, the situation of which at all events is more suitable than *Marussus*, which was an hour and a half to the north of Beisan, and which *Rabbi Schwarz* supposed to be Meroz (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 334). The curse upon the inhabitants of this place is described as a word or command of the angel of the Lord, inasmuch as it was the angel of the Lord who fought for Israel at Megiddo, as the revealer of the invisible God, and smote the Canaanites. Deborah heard from him the words of the curse upon the inhabitants of Meroz, because they did not come to help Jehovah when He was fighting with and for the Israelites. "*Among the heroes*," or mighty men, *i.e.* associating with the warriors of Israel.—Ver. 24. Jael behaved altogether differently, although she was not an Israelite, but a woman of the tribe of the Kenites, which was only allied with Israel (see chap. iv. 11, 17 sqq.). For her heroic deed she was to be blessed before women (מִן as in Gen. iii. 14, literally removed away from women). The "*women in the tent*" are dwellers in tents, or shepherdesses. This heroic act is poetically commemorated in the strophe which follows in vers. 25–27.

Ver. 25. He asked water, she gave him milk;
She handed him cream in the dish of nobles.
26. She stretched out her hand to the plug,
And her right hand to the workmen's hammer,
And hammered Sisera, broke his head,
And dashed in pieces and pierced his temples.
27. Between her feet he bowed, he fell, he lay down:
Between her feet he bowed, he fell:
Where he bowed, there he fell down dead.

Assuming that the fact itself is well known, Deborah does not think it necessary to mention Sisera's name in ver. 25. חֶמְאָה,

which generally signifies thick curdled milk, is used here as synonymous with חָלָב, in the sense of good superior milk. סֵפֶל is only used here and in chap. vi. 38, and signifies a bowl or vessel for holding liquids (see *Arab.*, *Chald.*, and *Talm.*; also *Bochart*, Hieroz. i. pp. 625 sqq., ed. *Ros.*). The dish of nobles is a fine costly bowl, such as they are accustomed to hand to noble guests. The whole verse is simply intended to express the thought, that Jael had given to her guest Sisera a friendly reception, and treated him honourably and hospitably, simply in order to make him feel secure.—Ver. 26. "*Her hand*," *i.e.* the left hand, as is shown by the antithesis, "her right hand," which follows. On the form תִּשְׁלַחְנָה, the third pers. fem. sing. with נָה attached, to distinguish it the more clearly from the second pers., see the remarks on Ex. i. 10. הַלְמוּת עֲמֵלִים, *hammer* or *mallet of the hard workers*, is a large heavy hammer. For the purpose of depicting the boldness and greatness of the deed, the words are crowded together in the second hemistich: הָלַם, to hammer, or smite with the hammer; מָחַק, *ἅπ. λεγ.*, to smite in pieces, smite through; מָחַץ, to smite or dash in pieces; חָלַף, to pierce or bore through. The heaping up of the words in ver. 27 answers the same purpose. They do not "express the delight of a satisfied thirst for revenge," but simply bring out the thought that Sisera, who was for years the terror of Israel, was now struck dead with a single blow. בַּאֲשֶׁר כָּרַע, at the place where he bowed, there he fell שָׁדוּד, overpowered and destroyed. In conclusion, the singer refers once more in the last strophe (vers. 28–30) to the mother of Sisera, as she waited impatiently for the return of her son, and foreboded his death, whilst the prudent princesses who surrounded her sought to cheer her with the prospect of a rich arrival of booty.

Ver. 28. Through the window there looks out and cries aloud
The mother of Sisera, through the lattice work,
Why does his chariot delay its coming?
Why tarry the steps of his team?
29. The wise of her princesses reply:
—But she repeats her words to herself—
30. Surely they are finding and sharing booty:
A maiden, two maidens to the head of a man,
Booty of variegated cloths for Sisera;
Booty of variegated cloths, garments worked in divers colours,
A variegated cloth, two garments worked in divers colours for his neck as booty.

Sisera's mother looks out with impatience for the return of her son, and cries aloud out of the window, Why is he never coming?—

foreboding the disastrous result of the war. תִּיבֵּב, *ἁπ. λεγ.*, signifies to cry; in Aramæan it is used for הֵרִיעַ and רְנַן, to denote a loud joyful cry; here it evidently signifies a loud cry of anxiety. For the repeated question, Why does his chariot delay its coming? is evidently expressive of anxiety and alarm. The form אֲחָרוּ, *perf. Piel for* אִחֲרוּ, may be attributed to the influence of the aleph, which favours the seghol sound, like יְחֻמוּ in Gen. xxx. 39. The combination of פַּעֲמֵי מַרְכְּבוֹתָיו, "steps of his chariots," cannot be explained, as it is by *Bertheau*, on the ground that the word פעמי, as a general expression for intermittent movement, might also be applied to the jerking of the wheels in rolling, but simply on the supposition that מַרְכָּבוֹת, as a synonym for רֶכֶב, is used for the horses yoked to the chariot in the sense of team, like רֶכֶב in 2 Sam. viii. 4, x. 18, etc.—Ver. 29. The princesses in attendance upon Sisera's mother sought to console her with the remark, that Sisera would have to gather together rich booty, and that his return was delayed in consequence. In the expression "the wisest of her princesses" (see *Ges.* § 119, 2), the irony is very obvious, as the reality put all their wise conjectures to shame. תַּעֲנֶנָּה, third pers. plur. fem. for תַּעֲנֵינָה. The second hemistich of ver. 29 contains a clause inserted as a parenthesis. אַף־הִיא is adversative: "*but she*;" אַף is only an emphatic copula; the antithesis lies in the emphatic change of subject indicated by הִיא. הֵשִׁיב אֲמָרֶיהָ, *lit.* to bring back her words, *i.e.* to repeat. לָהּ is used in a reflective sense, "to herself." The meaning is: But Sisera's mother did not allow herself to be quieted by the words of her wise princesses; on the contrary, she kept repeating the anxious question, Why does Sisera delay his coming? In ver. 30 there follows the answer of the wise princesses. They imagine that Sisera has been detained by the large amount of booty which has to be divided. הֲלֹא, *nonne*, is he not, in the sense of lively certainty. They will certainly discover rich booty, and divide it. רֶחֶם, *uterus*, for *puella*. "*A girl* (or indeed probably) *two girls to the head of the man*," *i.e.* for each man. צְבָעִים, *coloured things*, cloths or clothes. רִקְמָה, *worked stuff*, or garments worked in divers colours (see the remarks on Ex. xxvi. 36), is attached without the *vav cop.* to צְבָעִים, and is also dependent upon שְׁלַל. The closing words, לְצַוְּארֵי שָׁלָל, "*for the necks*," or (as the plural is also frequently used to signify a single neck, *e.g.* Gen. xxvii. 16, xlv. 14) "*for the neck of the booty*," do not give any appropriate sense, as שָׁלָל neither signifies animals taken as booty nor the taker of booty. The idea, however, that שָׁלָל is used for אִישׁ שָׁלָל, like חֵלֶד in 2 Sam. xii. 4

for אִישׁ חֹלֵךְ, *viator*, and חֹתֵף in Prov. xxiii. 28 for אִישׁ חָתָף, seems inadmissible, since שָׁלָל has just before been used three times in its literal sense. There is just the same objection to the application of שָׁלָל to animals taken as booty, not to mention the fact that they would hardly have thought of having valuable cloths upon the necks of animals taken as booty. Consequently the only explanation that remains, is either to alter לְצַוָּארֵי into לְצַוָּארוֹ or לְצַוָּארָיו, or else to change שָׁלָל into שֵׁגָל, the royal spouse. In the former case, שָׁלָל would have to be taken as in apposition to צֶבַע רִקְמָתַיִם: a variegated cloth, two worked in divers colours for his (Sisera's) neck as booty, as the LXX. have rendered it (*τῷ τραχήλῳ αὐτοῦ σκῦλα*). *Ewald* and *Bertheau* decide in favour of the second alteration, and defend it on the ground that שלל might easily find its way into the text as a copyist's error for שגל, on account of שלל having been already written three times before, and that we cannot dispense with some such word as שֵׁגָל here, since the repetition of שָׁלָל three times, and the threefold use of לְ, evidently show that there were three different kinds of people among whom the booty was to be distributed; and also that it was only a fitting thing that Sisera should set apart one portion of the booty to adorn the neck of his wife, and that the wisest of the noble ladies, when mentioning the booty, should not forget themselves.

Ver. 31*a*. So shall all Thine enemies perish, O Jehovah!
But let those who love Him be like the rising of the sun in its strength.

This forms the conclusion of the song. כֵּן, *so*, refers to the whole of the song: just in the same manner as Sisera and his warriors. The rising of the sun in its strength is a striking image of the exaltation of Israel to a more and more glorious unfolding of its destiny, which Deborah anticipated as the result of this victory. With the last clause, "*And the land had rest forty years*" (cf. chap. iii. 11, 30, viii. 28), the account of this event is brought to a close.

## II. THE TIMES OF GIDEON AND HIS FAMILY, AND OF THE JUDGES TOLA AND JAIR.—CHAP. VI.–X. 5.

In this second stage of the period of the judges, which did not extend over an entire century (only ninety-five years), Israel was only punished for its apostasy from the Lord, it is true, with a seven years' oppression by the Midianites; but the misery which these enemies, who allied themselves with Amalekites and other Arabian

hordes, brought upon both land and people, so far surpassed the pressure of the previous chastisements, that the Israelites were obliged to take refuge from the foe in ravines, caves, and strongholds of the mountains. But the more heavily the Lord punished His rebellious nation, the more gloriously did He set forth His nearness to help, and also the way which would lead to a lasting peace, and to true deliverance out of every trouble, in the manner in which He called and fitted Gideon to be its deliverer, and gave him the victory over the innumerable army of the hostile hordes, with only 300 chosen warriors. But the tendency to idolatry and to the worship of Baal had already become so strong in Israel, that even Gideon, that distinguished hero of God, who had been so marvellously called, and who refused the title of king when offered to him from genuine fidelity to the Lord, yielded to the temptation to establish for himself an unlawful worship, in a high-priestly ephod which had been prepared for his use, and thus gave the people an occasion for idolatry. For this reason his house was visited with severe judgments, which burst upon it after his death, under the three years' reign of his son Abimelech; although, notwithstanding the deep religious and moral depravity which was manifested in the doings of Abimelech, the Lord gave His people rest for forty-five years longer after the death of Abimelech under two judges, before He punished their apostasy with fresh hostile oppressions.

The history of Gideon and his family is related very fully, because the working of the grace and righteousness of the faithful covenant God was so obviously displayed therein, that it contained a rich treasure of instruction and warning for the church of the Lord in all ages. The account contains such an abundance of special notices of separate events and persons, as can only be explained on the supposition that the author made use of copious records which had been made by contemporaries and eye-witnesses of the events. At the same time, the separate details do not contain any such characteristic marks as will enable us to discover clearly, or determine with any certainty, the nature of the source or sources which the author employed. The only things peculiar to this narrative are the use of the prefix שׁ for אֲשֶׁר, not only in reports of the sayings of the persons engaged (chap. vi. 17), but also in the direct narrative of facts (chap. vii. 12, viii. 26), and the formula רוּחַ יְהוָה לָבְשָׁה (chap. vi. 34), which only occurs again in 1 Chron. xii. 18, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20. On the other hand, neither

the interchange of *ha-Elohim* (chap. vi. 36, 39, vii. 14) and *Elohim* (chap. vi. 40, viii. 3, ix. 7, 9, 13, 23, 56, 57) with *Jehovah*, nor the use of the name *Jerubbaal* for *Gideon* (chap. vi. 32, vii. 1, viii. 29, ix. 1, 2, 5, 16, 19, 24, 28), nor lastly the absence of the "theocratical pragmatism" in chap. ix., contains any proof of the nature of the source employed, or even of the employment of two different sources, as these peculiarities are founded upon the contents and materials of the narrative itself.[1]

*Oppression of Israel by the Midianites, and call of Gideon to be their Deliverer.*—Chap. vi. 1–32.

Vers. 1–10. *Renewed Apostasy of the Nation, and its Punishment.*—Ver. 1. As the Israelites forsook Jehovah their God again, the Lord delivered them up for seven years into the hands of the Midianites. The *Midianites*, who were descendants of Abraham and Keturah (Gen. xxv. 2), and had penetrated into the grassy steppes on the eastern side of the country of the Moabites and

[1] Even *Bertheau*, who infers from these data that two different sources were employed, admits that *ha-Elohim* in the mouth of the Midianites (chap. vii. 14) and *Elohim* in Jotham's fable, where it is put into the mouth of the trees, prove nothing at all, because here, from the different meanings of the divine names, the author could not have used anything but *Elohim*. But the same difference is quite as unmistakeable in chap. viii. 3, ix. 7, 23, 56, 57, since in these passages, either the antithesis of man and God, or the idea of supernatural causality, made it most natural for the author to use the general name of God even if it did not render it absolutely necessary. There remain, therefore, only chap. vi. 20, 36, 39, 40, where the use of *ha-Elohim* and *Elohim* instead of Jehovah may possibly have originated with the source made use of by the author. On the other hand, the name *Jerubbaal*, which Gideon received in consequence of the destruction of the altar of Baal (chap. vi. 32), is employed with conscious reference to its origin and meaning, not only in chap. vii. 1, viii. 29, 35, but also throughout chap. ix., as we may see more especially in chap. ix. 16, 19, 28. And lastly, even the peculiarities of chap. ix.—namely, that the names *Jehovah* and *Gideon* do not occur there at all, and that many historical circumstances are related apparently without any link of connection, and torn away from some wider context, which might have rendered them intelligible, and without which very much remains obscure—do not prove that the author drew these incidents from a different source from the rest of the history of Gideon,—such, for example, as a more complete history of the town of Shechem and its rulers in the time of the judges, as *Bertheau* imagines. For these peculiarities may be explained satisfactorily enough from the intention so clearly expressed in chap. viii. 34, 35, and ix. 57, of showing how the ingratitude of the Israelites towards Gideon, especially the wickedness of the Shechemites, who helped to murder Gideon's sons to gratify Abimelech, was punished by God. And no other peculiarities can be discovered that could possibly establish a diversity of sources.

Ammonites (see at Num. xxii. 4), had shown hostility to Israel even in the time of Moses, and had been defeated in a war of retaliation on the part of the Israelites (Num. xxxi.). But they had afterwards recovered their strength, so that now, after an interval of 200 years, the Lord used them as a rod of chastisement for His rebellious people. In vers. 1, 2, 6, they alone are mentioned as oppressors of Israel; but in vers. 3, 33, and chap. vii. 12, the Amalekites and children of the east are mentioned in connection with them, from which we may see that the Midianites were the principal enemies, but had allied themselves with other predatory Bedouin tribes, to make war upon the Israelites and devastate their land. On the *Amalekites*, those leading enemies of the people of God who had sprung from Esau, see the notes on Gen. xxxvi. 12 and Ex. xvii. 8. "*Children of the east*" (see Job i. 3) is the general name for the tribes that lived in the desert on the east of Palestine, "like the name of *Arabs* in the time of *Josephus* (in Ant. v. 6, 1, he calls the children of the east mentioned here by the name of Arabs), or in later times the names of the Nabatæans and Kedarenes" (*Bertheau*). Hence we find in chap. viii. 10, that all the enemies who oppressed the Israelites are called "children of the east."—Vers. 2–5. *The oppression of Israel by Midian and its allies.* Their power pressed so severely upon the Israelites, that before (or because of) them the latter "*made them the ravines which are in the mountains, and the caves, and the strongholds*," *sc.* which were to be met with all over the land in after times (viz. at the time when our book was written), and were safe places of refuge in time of war. This is implied in the definite article before מְנָהָרוֹת and the following substantives. The words "*they made them*" are not at variance with the fact that there are many natural caves to be found in the limestone mountains of Palestine. For, on the one hand, they do not affirm that all the caves to be found in the land were made by the Israelites at that time; and, on the other hand, עָשָׂה does not preclude the use of natural caves as places of refuge, since it not only denotes the digging and making of caves, but also the adaptation of natural caves to the purpose referred to, *i.e.* the enlargement of them, or whatever was required to make them habitable. The *ἅπ. λεγ.* מְנָהָרוֹת does not mean "light holes" (*Bertheau*), or "holes with openings to the light," from נָהַר, in the sense of to stream, to enlighten (*Rashi*, *Kimchi*, etc.), but is to be taken in the sense of "*mountain ravines*," hollowed out by torrents (from נָהַר, to pour), which the Israelites made into hiding-

places. מְצָדוֹת, *fortresses*, mountain strongholds. These ravines, caves, and fortresses were not merely to serve as hiding-places for the Israelitish fugitives, but much more as places of concealment for their possessions and necessary supplies. For the Midianites, like genuine Bedouins, thought far more of robbing and plundering and laying waste the land of the Israelites, than of exterminating the people themselves. *Herodotus* (i. 17) says just the same respecting the war of the Lydian king Alyattes with the Milesians. —Vers. 3, 4. When the Israelites had sown, the Midianites and their allies came upon them, encamped against them, and destroyed the produce of the land (the fruits of the field and soil) as far as Gaza, in the extreme south-west of the land ("till thou come," as in Gen. x. 19, etc.). As the enemy invaded the land with their camels and flocks, and on repeated occasions encamped in the valley of Jezreel (ver. 33), they must have entered the land on the west of the Jordan by the main road which connects the countries on the east with Palestine on the west, crossing the Jordan near Beisan, and passing through the plain of Jezreel; and from this point they spread over Palestine to the sea-coast of Gaza. "*They left no sustenance* (in the shape of produce of the field and soil) *in Israel, and neither sheep, nor oxen, nor asses. For they came on with their flocks, and their tents came like grasshoppers in multitude.*" The *Chethibh* יָבְאוּ is not to be altered into וּבָאוּ, according to the *Keri* and certain *Codd.* If we connect וְאָהֳלֵיהֶם with the previous words, according to the Masoretic pointing, we have a simple asyndeton. It is more probable, however, that ואהליהם belongs to what follows: "*And their tents came in such numbers as grasshoppers.*" כֶּבְרִי, *lit.* like a multitude of grasshoppers, in such abundance. "*Thus they came into the land to devastate it.*"—Ver. 6. The Israelites were greatly weakened in consequence (וַיִּדַּל, the *imperf. Niphal* of דָּלַל), so that in their distress they cried to the Lord for help.—Vers. 7–10. But before helping them, the Lord sent a prophet to reprove the people for not hearkening to the voice of their God, in order that they might reflect, and might recognise in the oppression which crushed them the chastisement of God for their apostasy, and so be brought to sincere repentance and conversion by their remembrance of the former miraculous displays of the grace of God. The Lord God, said the prophet to the people, brought you out of Egypt, the house of bondage, and delivered you out of the hand of Egypt (Ex. xviii. 9), and out of the hand of all your oppressors (see chap. ii. 18, iv. 3, x. 12),

whom He drove before you (the reference is to the Amorites and Canaanites who were conquered by Moses and Joshua); but ye have not followed His commandment, that ye should not worship the gods of the Amorites. The Amorites stand here for the Canaanites, as in Gen. xv. 16 and Josh. xxiv. 15.

Vers. 11–32. *Call of Gideon to be the Deliverer of Israel.*—As the reproof of the prophet was intended to turn the hearts of the people once more to the Lord their God and deliverer, so the manner in which God called Gideon to be their deliverer, and rescued Israel from its oppressors through his instrumentality, was intended to furnish the most evident proof that the help and salvation of Israel were not to be found in man, but solely in their God. God had also sent their former judges. The Spirit of Jehovah had come upon Othniel, so that he smote the enemy in the power of God (chap. iii. 10). Ehud had put to death the hostile king by stratagem, and then destroyed his army; and Barak had received the command of the Lord, through the prophetess Deborah, to deliver His people from the dominion of their foes, and had carried out the command with her assistance. But Gideon was called to be the deliverer of Israel through an appearance of the angel of the Lord, to show to him and to all Israel, that Jehovah, the God of the fathers, was still near at hand to His people, and could work miracles as in the days of old, if Israel would only adhere to Him and keep His covenant. The call of Gideon took place in two revelations from God. First of all the Lord appeared to him in the visible form of an angel, in which He had already made himself known to the patriarchs, and summoned him in the strength of God to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Midianites (vers. 11–24). He then commanded him, in a dream of the night, to throw down his father's altar of Baal, and to offer a burnt-offering to Jehovah his God upon an altar erected for the purpose (vers. 25–32). In the first revelation the Lord acknowledged Gideon; in the second He summoned Gideon to acknowledge Him as his God.

Vers. 11–24. *Appearance of the Angel of the Lord.*—Ver. 11. The angel of the Lord, *i.e.* Jehovah, in a visible self-revelation in human form (see vol. i. pp. 185 sqq.), appeared this time in the form of a traveller with a staff in his hand (ver. 21), and sat down "*under the terebinth which* (was) *in Ophrah, that* (belonged) *to Joash the Abi-ezrite.*" It was not the oak, but Ophrah, that belonged to Joash, as we may see from ver. 24, where the expression "Ophrah of the Abi-ezrite" occurs. According to Josh. xvii. 2 and

1 Chron. vii. 18, *Abiezer* was a family in the tribe of Manasseh, and according to ver. 15 it was a small family of that tribe. *Joash* was probably the head of the family at that time, and as such was the lord or owner of *Ophrah*, a town (chap. viii. 27; cf. ix. 5) which was called "Ophrah of the Abi-ezrite," to distinguish it from Ophrah in the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. xviii. 23). The situation of the town has not yet been determined with certainty. *Josephus* (Ant. v. 6, 5) calls it *Ephran*. *Van de Velde* conjectures that it is to be found in the ruins of *Erfai*, opposite to Akrabeh, towards the S.E., near the Mohammedan Wely of Abu Kharib, on the S.W. of Janun (Mem. pp. 337–8), close to the northern boundary of the tribe-territory of Ephraim, if not actually within it. By this terebinth tree was Gideon the son of Joash "*knocking out wheat in the wine-press*." חָבַט does not mean to thresh, but to knock with a stick. The wheat was threshed upon open floors, or in places in the open field that were rolled hard for the purpose, with threshing carriages or threshing shoes, or else with oxen, which they drove about over the scattered sheaves to tread out the grains with their hoofs. Only poor people knocked out the little corn that they had gleaned with a stick (Ruth ii. 17), and Gideon did it in the existing times of distress, namely in the pressing-tub, which, like all wine-presses, was sunk in the ground, in a hole that had been dug out or hewn in the rock (for a description of cisterns of this kind, see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 135–6), "*to make the wheat fly*" (*i.e.* to make it safe) "*from the Midianites*" (מִפְנֵי as in Ex. ix. 20).—Ver. 12. While he was thus engaged the angel of the Lord appeared to him, and addressed him in these words: "*Jehovah* (is) *with thee, thou brave hero.*" This address contained the promise that the Lord would be with Gideon, and that he would prove himself a mighty hero through the strength of the Lord. This promise was to be a guarantee to him of strength and victory in his conflict with the Midianites.—Ver. 13. But Gideon, who did not recognise the angel of the Lord in the man who was sitting before him, replied doubtingly, "*Pray, sir, if Jehovah is with us, why has all this befallen us?*"—words which naturally recall to mind the words of Deut. xxxi. 17, "Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us?" "*And where*," continued Gideon, "*are all His miracles, of which our fathers have told us? . . . But now Jehovah hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites.*" Gideon may have been reflecting, while knocking the wheat, upon the misery of his people, and the best means of delivering them from the

oppression of the enemy, but without being able to think of any possibility of rescuing them. For this reason he could not understand the address of the unknown traveller, and met his promise with the actual state of things with which it was so directly at variance, namely, the crushing oppression of his people by their enemies, from which he concluded that the Lord had forsaken them and given them up to their foes.—Ver. 14. "*Then Jehovah turned to him and said, Go in this thy strength, and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have not I sent thee?*" The writer very appropriately uses the name Jehovah here, instead of the angel of Jehovah; for by his reply the angel distinctly manifested himself as Jehovah, more especially in the closing words, "*Have not I sent thee?*" (הֲלֹא, in the sense of lively assurance), which are so suggestive of the call of Moses to be the deliverer of Israel (Ex. iii. 12). "*In this thy strength*," *i.e.* the strength which thou now hast, since Jehovah is with thee—Jehovah, who can still perform miracles as in the days of the fathers. The demonstrative "*this*" points to the strength which had just been given to him through the promise of God.—Ver. 15. Gideon perceived from these words that it was not a mere man who was speaking to him. He therefore said in reply, not "pray sir" (אֲדֹנִי), but "*pray, Lord*" (אֲדֹנָי, *i.e.* Lord God), and no longer speaks of deliverance as impossible; but simply inquires, with a consciousness of his own personal weakness and the weakness of his family, "*Whereby* (with what) *shall I save Israel? Behold, my family* (*lit.* '*thousand*,' equivalent to *mishpachah*: see at Num. i. 16) *is the humblest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house* (my family)."—Ver. 16. To this difficulty the Lord replies, "*I will be with thee* (see Ex. iii. 12, Josh. i. 5), *and thou wilt smite the Midianites as one man*," *i.e.* at one blow, as they slay a single man (see Num. xiv. 15).—Vers. 17 sqq. As Gideon could no longer have any doubt after this promise that the person who had appeared to him was speaking in the name of God, he entreated him to assure him by a *sign* (אוֹת, a miraculous sign) of the certainty of his appearance. "*Do a sign that thou art speaking with me*," *i.e.* that thou art really God, as thou affirmest. שְׂאֵתָה, for אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה, is taken from the language of ordinary life. At the same time he presents this request: "*Depart not hence till I* (go and) *come to thee, and bring out my offering and set it before thee;*" and the angel at once assents. *Minchah* does not mean a sacrifice in the strict sense (*θυσία, sacrificium*), nor merely a "gift of food," but a sacrificial gift in the

sense of a gift presented to God, on the acceptance of which he hoped to receive the sign, which would show whether the person who had appeared to him was really God. This sacrificial gift consisted of such food as they were accustomed to set before a guest whom they wished especially to honour. Gideon prepared a kid of the goats (עָשָׂה is used to denote the preparation of food, as in Gen. xviii. 7, 8, etc.), and unleavened cakes of an ephah (about 22½ lbs.) of meal, and brought the flesh in a basket and the broth in a pot out to the terebinth tree, and placed it before him.—Vers. 20, 21. The angel of the Lord then commanded him to lay the flesh and the cakes upon a rock close by, and to pour the broth upon it; that is to say, to make use of the rock as an altar for the offering to be presented to the Lord. When he had done this, the angel touched the food with the end of his staff, and fire came out of the rock and consumed the food, and the angel of the Lord vanished out of Gideon's sight. "*This* rock," *i.e.* a rocky stone that was lying near. The departure of the angel from his eyes is to be regarded as a sudden disappearance; but the expression does not warrant the assumption that the angel ascended to heaven in this instance, as in chap. xiii. 19, 20, in the flame of the sacrifice.—Ver. 22. In this miracle Gideon received the desired sign, that the person who had appeared to him was God. But the miracle filled his soul with fear, so that he exclaimed, "*Alas, Lord Jehovah! for to this end have I seen the angel of the Lord face to face.*" אֲהָהּ אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה is an exclamation, sometimes of grief on account of a calamity that has occurred (Josh vii. 7), and sometimes of alarm caused by the foreboding of some anticipated calamity (Jer. i. 6, iv. 10, xxxii. 17; Ezek. iv. 14, etc.). Here it is an expression of alarm, viz. fear of the death which might be the necessary consequence of his seeing God (see Ex. xx. 16 (19), and the remarks on Gen. xvi. 13). The expression which follows, "*for to this end*," serves to account for the exclamation, without there being any necessity to assume an ellipsis, and supply "that I may die." כִּי־עַל־כֵּן is always used in this sense (see Gen. xviii. 5, xix. 8, xxxiii. 10, etc.).—Vers. 23, 24. But the Lord comforted him with the words, "*Peace to thee; fear not: thou wilt not die.*" These words were not spoken by the angel as he vanished away, but were addressed by God to Gideon, after the disappearance of the angel, by an inward voice. In gratitude for this comforting assurance, Gideon built an altar to the Lord, which he called *Jehovah-shalom*, "the Lord is peace." The intention of this altar, which was preserved "unto this day," *i.e.* till the

time when the book of Judges was composed, is indicated in the name that was given to it. It was not to serve as a place of sacrifice, but to be a memorial and a witness of the revelation of God which had been made to Gideon, and of the proof which he had received that Jehovah was peace, *i.e.* would not destroy Israel in wrath, but cherished thoughts of peace. For the assurance of peace which He had given to Gideon, was also a confirmation of His announcement that Gideon would conquer the Midianites in the strength of God, and deliver Israel from its oppressors.

The theophany here described resembles so far the appearance of the angel of the Lord to Abram in the grove of Mamre (Gen. xviii.), that he appears in perfect human form, comes as a traveller, and allows food to be set before him; but there is this essential difference between the two, that whereas the three men who came to Abraham took the food that was set before them and ate thereof, —that is to say, allowed themselves to be hospitably entertained by Abraham,—the angel of the Lord in the case before us did indeed accept the *minchah* that had been made ready for him, but only as a sacrifice of Jehovah which he caused to ascend in fire. The reason for this essential difference is to be found in the different purpose of the two theophanies. To Abraham the Lord came to seal that fellowship of grace into which He had entered with him through the covenant that He had made; but in the case of Gideon His purpose was simply to confirm the truth of His promise, that Jehovah would be with him and would send deliverance through him to His people, or to show that the person who had appeared to him was the God of the fathers, who could still deliver His people out of the power of their enemies by working such miracles as the fathers had seen. But the acceptance of the *minchah* prepared for Him, as a sacrifice which the Lord himself caused to be miraculously consumed by fire, showed that the Lord would still graciously accept the prayers and sacrifices of Israel, if they would but forsake the worship of the dead idols of the heathen, and return to Him in sincerity. (Compare with this the similar theophany in chap. xiii.)

Vers. 25–32. *Gideon set apart as the Deliverer of his People.*—In order to be able to carry out the work entrusted to him of setting Israel free, it was necessary that Gideon should first of all purify his father's house from idolatry, and sanctify his own life and labour to Jehovah by sacrificing a burnt-offering.—Ver. 25. "*In that night*," *i.e.* the night following the day on which the Lord

appeared to him, God commanded him to destroy his father's Baal's altar, with the *asherah-idol* upon it, and to build an altar to Jehovah, and offer a bullock of his father's upon the altar. "*Take the ox-bullock which belongs to thy father, and indeed the second bullock of seven years, and destroy the altar of Baal, which belongs to thy father, and throw down the asherah upon it.*" According to the general explanation of the first clauses, there are two oxen referred to: viz. *first*, his father's young bullock; and *secondly*, an ox of seven years old, the latter of which Gideon was to sacrifice (according to ver. 26) upon the altar to be built to Jehovah, and actually did sacrifice, according to vers. 27, 28. But in what follows there is no further allusion to the young bullock, or the first ox of his father; so that there is a difficulty in comprehending for what purpose Gideon was to take it, or what use he was to make of it. Most commentators suppose that Gideon sacrificed both of the oxen,—the young bullock as an expiatory offering for himself, his father, and all his family, and the second ox of seven years old for the deliverance of the whole nation (see *Seb. Schmidt*). *Bertheau* supposes, on the other hand, that Gideon was to make use of both oxen, or of the strength they possessed for throwing down or destroying the altar, and (according to ver. 26) for removing the מַעֲרָכָה and the עֲצֵי הָאֲשֵׁרָה to the place of the new altar that was to be built, but that he was only to offer the second in sacrifice to Jehovah, because the first was probably dedicated to Baal, and therefore could not be offered to Jehovah. But these assumptions are both of them equally arbitrary, and have no support whatever from the text. If God had commanded Gideon to take two oxen, He would certainly have told him what he was to do with them both. But as there is only one bullock mentioned in vers. 26–28, we must follow *Tremell.* and others, who understand ver. 25 as meaning that Gideon was to take only one bullock, namely the young bullock of his father, and therefore regard וּפַר הַשֵּׁנִי שֶׁבֶע שָׁנִים as a more precise definition of that one bullock (*vav* being used in an explanatory sense, "and indeed," as in Josh. ix. 27, x. 7, etc.). This bullock is called "the second bullock," as being the second in age among the bullocks of Joash. The reason for choosing this second of the bullocks of Joash for a burnt-offering is to be found no doubt in its age (seven years), which is mentioned here simply on account of its significance as a number, as there was no particular age prescribed in the law for a burnt-offering, that is to say, because the seven years which constituted the age of the bullock contained an

inward allusion to the seven years of the Midianitish oppression. For *seven* years had God given Israel into the hands of the Midianites on account of their apostasy; and now, to wipe away this sin, Gideon was to take his father's bullock of *seven* years old, and offer it as a burnt-offering to the Lord. To this end Gideon was first of all to destroy the altar of Baal and of the *asherah* which his father possessed, and which, to judge from vers. 28, 29, was the common altar of the whole family of Abiezer in Ophrah. This altar was dedicated to Baal, but there was also upon it an *asherah*, an idol representing the goddess of nature, which the Canaanites worshipped; not indeed a *statue* of the goddess, but, as we may learn from the word כָּרַת, to *hew down*, simply a wooden pillar (see at Deut. xvi. 21). The altar therefore served for the two principal deities of the Canaanites (see *Movers*, Phönizier, i. pp. 566 sqq.). Jehovah could not be worshipped along with Baal. Whoever would serve the Lord must abolish the worship of Baal. The altar of Baal must be destroyed before the altar of Jehovah could be built. Gideon was to build this altar "*upon the top of this stronghold*," possibly upon the top of the mountain, upon which the fortress belonging to Ophrah was situated. בַּמַּעֲרָכָה, "*with the preparation*;" the meaning of this word is a subject of dispute. As בְּנָה occurs in 1 Kings xv. 22 with בְּ, to denote the materials out of which (*i.e.* with which) a thing is built, *Stud.* and *Berth.* suppose that *maaracah* refers to the materials of the altar of Baal that had been destroyed, with which Gideon was to build the altar of Jehovah. *Stud.* refers it to the stone foundation of the altar of Baal; *Bertheau* to the materials that were lying ready upon the altar of Baal for the presentation of sacrifices, more especially the pieces of wood. But this is certainly incorrect, because *maaracah* does not signify either building materials or pieces of wood, and the definite article attached to the word does not refer to the altar of Baal at all. The verb עָרַךְ is not only very frequently used to denote the preparation of the wood upon the altar (Gen. xxii. 9; Lev. i. 7, etc.), but is also used for the preparation of an altar for the presentation of sacrifice (Num. xxiii. 4). Consequently *maaracah* can hardly be understood in any other way than as signifying the preparation of the altar to be built for the sacrificial act, in the sense of build the altar with the preparation required for the sacrifice. This preparation was to consist, according to what follows, in taking the wood of the *asherah*, that had been hewn down, as the wood for the burnt-offering to be offered to the Lord by Gideon. עֲצֵי הָאֲשֵׁרָה are not

trees, but pieces of wood from the *asherah* (that was hewn down).—Ver. 27. Gideon executed this command of God with ten men of his servants during the night, no doubt the following night, because he was afraid to do it by day, on account of his family (his father's house), and the people of the town.—Vers. 28, 29. But on the following morning, when the people of the town found the altar of Baal destroyed and the *asherah* upon it hewn down, and the bullock sacrificed upon the (newly) erected altar (the bullock would not be entirely consumed), they asked who had done it, and soon learned that Gideon had done it all. The accusative אֵת הַפָּר הַשֵּׁנִי is governed by the *Hophal* הָעְלָה (for הָעֳלָה, see *Ges.* s. 63, Anm. 4), according to a construction that was by no means rare, especially in the earlier Hebrew, viz. of the passive with אֵת (see at Gen. iv. 18). "*They asked and sought*," *sc.* for the person who had done it; "*and they said*," either those who were making the inquiry, according to a tolerably safe conjecture, or the persons who were asked, and who were aware of what Gideon had done.—Vers. 30, 31. But when they demanded of Joash, "*Bring out* (give out) *thy son, that he may die*," he said to all who stood round, "*Will ye, ye, fight for Baal, or will ye save him?* ('ye' is repeated with special emphasis). *Whoever shall fight for him* (Baal), *shall be put to death till the morning*." עַד־הַבֹּקֶר, till the (next) morning, is not to be joined to יוּמַת, in the sense of "very speedily, before the dawning day shall break" (*Bertheau*),—a sense which is not to be found in the words: it rather belongs to the subject of the clause, or to the whole clause in the sense of, Whoever shall fight for Baal, and seek to avenge the destruction of his altar by putting the author of it to death, shall be put to death himself; let us wait till to-morrow, and give Baal time to avenge the insult which he has received. "*If he be God, let him fight for himself; for they have destroyed his altar*," and have thereby challenged his revenge. Gideon's daring act of faith had inspired his father Joash with believing courage, so that he took the part of his son, and left the whole matter to the deity to decide. If Baal were really God, he might be expected to avenge the crime that had been committed against this altar.—Ver. 32. From this fact Gideon received the name of *Jerubbaal, i.e.* "*let Baal fight* (or decide)," since they said, "*Let Baal fight against him, for he has destroyed his altar*." יְרֻבַּעַל is formed from יָרַב = יָרִב or יָרִיב and בַּעַל. This surname very soon became an honourable title for Gideon. When, for example, it became apparent to the people that Baal could not do him any

harm, *Jerubbaal* became a Baal-fighter, one who had fought against Baal. In 2 Sam. xi. 21, instead of *Jerubbaal* we find the name *Jerubbesheth*, in which *Besheth* = *Bosheth* is a nickname of Baal, which also occurs in other Israelitish names, *e.g.* in *Ishbosheth* (2 Sam. ii. 8 sqq.) for *Eshbaal* (1 Chron. viii. 33, ix. 39). The name *Jerubbaal* is written Ἱεροβάαλ by the LXX., from which in all probability *Philo* of Byblus, in his revision of Sanchuniathon, has formed his Ἱερόμβαλος, a priest of the god Ἰεύω.

*Gideon's Victory over the Midianites.*—Chap. vi. 33–viii. 3.

Chap. vi. 33–40. Equipment of Gideon for the Battle. —When the Midianites and their allies once more invaded the land of Israel, Gideon was seized by the Spirit of God, so that he gathered together an army from the northern tribes of Israel (vers. 33–35), and entreated God to assure him by a sign of gaining the victory over the enemy (vers. 36–40).—Vers. 33 sqq. The enemy gathered together again, went over (viz. across) the Jordan in the neighbourhood of Beisan (see at chap. vii. 24 and viii. 4), and encamped in the valley of Jezreel (see at Josh. xvii. 16). "*And the Spirit of Jehovah came upon Gideon*" (לָבְשָׁה, *clothed*, *i.e.* descended upon him, and laid itself around him as it were like a coat of mail, or a strong equipment, so that he became invulnerable and invincible in its might: see 1 Chron. xii. 18, 2 Chron. xxiv. 20, and Luke xxiv. 49). Gideon then blew the trumpet, to call Israel to battle against the foe (see chap. iii. 27); "*and Abiezer let itself be summoned after him.*" His own family, which had recognised the deliverer of Israel in the fighter of Baal, who was safe from Baal's revenge, was the first to gather round him. Their example was followed by all Manasseh, *i.e.* the Manassites on the west of the Jordan (for the tribes on the east of the Jordan took no part in the war), and the neighbouring tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali on the north, which had been summoned by heralds to the battle. "*They advanced to meet them:*" *i.e.* to meet the Manassites, who were coming from the south to the battle, to make war upon the enemy in concert with them and under the guidance of Gideon. עָלָה is used to denote their advance against the enemy (see at Josh. viii. 2), and not in the sense of going up, since the Asherites and Naphtalites would not go up from their mountains into the plain of Jezreel, but could only go down.—Vers. 36 sqq. But before Gideon went into the battle with the assembled army, he asked for a sign from God of the success of his under-

taking. "*If Thou*," he said to God, "*art saving Israel through my hand, as Thou hast said, behold, I lay this fleece of wool upon the floor; if there shall be dew upon the fleece only, and dryness upon all the earth* (round about), *I know* (by this) *that Thou wilt save*," etc. גֵּזַת הַצֶּמֶר, *the shorn of the wool; i.e.* the fleece, the wool that had been shorn off a sheep, and still adhered together as one whole fleece. The sign which Gideon asked for, therefore, was that God would cause the dew to fall only upon a shorn fleece, which he would spread the previous night upon the floor, that is to say, upon some open ground, and that the ground all round might not be moistened by the dew.—Ver. 38. God granted the sign. "*And so it came to pass; the next morning, Gideon pressed the fleece together* (יָזַר from זוּר), *and squeezed* (יִמְצֶה from מָצָה) *dew out of the fleece a vessel full of water*" (מָלֵא as in Num. xxii. 18, and סָפַל as in chap. v. 25). So copiously had the dew fallen in the night upon the fleece that was exposed; whereas, as we may supply from the context, the earth all round had remained dry.—Vers. 39, 40. But as this sign was not quite a certain one, since wool generally attracts the dew, even when other objects remain dry, Gideon ventured to solicit the grace of God to grant him another sign with the fleece, —namely, that the fleece might remain dry, and the ground all round be wet with dew. And God granted him this request also. Gideon's prayer for a sign did not arise from want of faith in the divine assurance of a victory, but sprang from the weakness of the flesh, which crippled the strength of the spirit's faith, and often made the servants of God so anxious and despondent, that God had to come to the relief of their weakness by the manifestation of His miraculous power. Gideon knew himself and his own strength, and was well aware that his human strength was not sufficient for the conquest of the foe. But as the Lord had promised him His aid, he wished to make sure of that aid through the desired sign.[1] And "the simple fact that such a man could obtain the most daring victory was to be a special glorification of God" (*O. v. Gerlach*). The sign itself was to manifest the strength of the divine assistance to his weakness of faith. Dew in the Scriptures is a symbol of the

[1] "From all these things, the fact that he had seen and heard the angel of Jehovah, and that he had been taught by fire out of the rock, by the disappearance of the angel, by the vision of the night, and by the words addressed to him there, Gideon did indeed believe that God both could and would deliver Israel through his instrumentality; but this faith was not placed above or away from the conflict of the flesh by which it was tested. And it is not strange that

beneficent power of God, which quickens, revives, and invigorates the objects of nature, when they have been parched by the burning heat of the sun's rays. The first sign was to be a pledge to him of the visible and tangible blessing of the Lord upon His people, the proof that He would grant them power over their mighty foes by whom Israel was then oppressed. The woollen fleece represented the nation of Israel in its condition at that time, when God had given power to the foe that was devastating its land, and had withdrawn His blessing from Israel. The moistening of the fleece with the dew of heaven whilst the land all round continued dry, was a sign that the Lord God would once more give strength to His people from on high, and withdraw it from the nations of the earth. Hence the second sign acquires the more general signification, "that the Lord manifested himself even in the weakness and forsaken condition of His people, while the nations were flourishing all around" (*O. v. Gerl.*); and when so explained, it served to confirm and strengthen the first, inasmuch as it contained the comforting assurance for all times, that the Lord has not forsaken His church, even when it cannot discern and trace His beneficent influence, but rules over it and over the nations with His almighty power.

Chap. vii. 1–8. MUSTERING OF THE ARMY THAT GIDEON HAD COLLECTED.—Ver. 1. When Gideon had been assured of the help of God by this double sign, he went to the battle early the next morning with the people that he had gathered around him. The Israelites encamped above the fountain of *Harod, i.e.* upon a height at the foot of which this fountain sprang; but the camp of Midian was to him (Gideon) to the north of the hill *Moreh* in the valley (of Jezreel: see chap. vi. 33). The geographical situation of these two places cannot be determined with certainty. The fountain of *Harod* is never mentioned again, though there is a place of that name referred to in 2 Sam. xxiii. 25 as the home of two of David's heroes; and it was from this, no doubt, that the fountain was named. The hill *Moreh* is also unknown. As it was by the valley (of Jezreel), we cannot possibly think of the grove of *Moreh* at Shechem

it rose to its greatest height when the work of deliverance was about to be performed. Wherefore Gideon with his faith sought for a sign from God against the more vehement struggle of the flesh, in order that his faith might be the more confirmed, and might resist the opposing flesh with the greater force. And this petition for a sign was combined with prayers for the strengthening of his faith."—*Seb. Schmidt.*

(Gen. xii. 6; Deut. xi. 30).[1]—Vers. 2, 3. The army of the Israelites amounted to 32,000 men (ver. 4), but that of the Midianites and their allies was about 135,000 (chap. viii. 10), so that they were greatly superior to the Israelites in numbers. Nevertheless the Lord said to Gideon, "*The people that are with thee are too many for me to give Midian into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, My hand hath helped me.*" רַב followed by מִן is to be understood as a comparative. Gideon was therefore to have a proclamation made before all the people: "*Whosoever is fearful and despondent, let him turn and go back from Mount Gilead.*" The ἅπ. λεγ. צָפַר, judging from the Arabic, which signifies to plait, viz. hair, ropes, etc., and the noun צְפִירָה, a circle or circuitous orbit, probably signifies to twist one's self round; hence in this instance to return in windings, to slink away in bypaths. The expression "*from Mount Gilead,*" however, is very obscure. The mountain (or the mountains) of Gilead was on the eastern side of the Jordan; but the Israelitish army was encamped in or near the plain of Jezreel, in the country to the west of the Jordan, and had been gathered from the western tribes alone; so that even the inadmissible rendering, Let him turn and go home to the mountains of Gilead, would not give any appropriate sense. The only course left therefore is either to pronounce it an error of the text, as *Clericus* and *Bertheau* have done, and to regard "Gilead" as a mistake for "Gilboa," or to conclude that there was also a mountain or mountain range named *Gilead* by the plain of Jezreel in western Palestine, just as, according to Josh. xv. 10, there was a mountain, or range of mountains, called *Seir*, in the territory of Judah, of which nothing further is known. The appeal which Gideon is here directed to make to the army was prescribed in the law (Deut. xx. 8) for every war

[1] *Bertheau* endeavours to settle the position of the place from our knowledge of the country, which is for the most part definite enough. Starting with the assumption that the fountain of *Harod* cannot be any other than the "fountain in Jezreel" mentioned in 1 Sam. xxix. 1, where Saul and the Israelites encamped at Gilboa (1 Sam. xxviii. 4) to fight against the Philistines who were posted at *Shunem*, a place on the western slope of the so-called Little Hermon, he concludes that the fountain of *Harod* must be the present *Ain Jalud*, and the hill of *Moreh* the Little *Hermon* itself. These combinations are certainly possible, for we have nothing definite to oppose to them; still they are very uncertain, as they simply rest upon the very doubtful assumption that the only fountain in the plain of Jezreel was the celebrated fountain called *Ain Jalud*, and are hardly reconcilable with the account given of the route which was taken by the defeated Midianites (vers. 25 sqq. and chap. viii. 4).

in which the Israelites should be engaged, and its general object was to fortify the spirit of the army by removing the cowardly and desponding. But in the case before us the intention of the Lord was to deprive His people of all ground for self-glorification. Hence the result of the appeal was one which Gideon himself certainly did not expect,—namely, that more than two-thirds of the soldiers gathered round him—22,000 men of the people—turned back, and only 10,000 remained.—Ver. 4. But even this number was regarded by the Lord as still too great, so that He gave to Gideon the still further command, "*Bring them* (the 10,000 men) *down to the water*," *i.e.* the waters formed from the fountain of Harod, "*and I will purify them for thee there* (צָרַף, separate those appointed for the battle from the rest of the army; the singular suffix refers to הָעָם), *and say to thee, This shall go with thee, and that*," *i.e.* show thee each individual who is to go with thee to the battle, and who not.—Vers. 5, 6. Gideon was to divide the people by putting all those who should lick the water with their tongue as a dog licketh into one class, and all those who knelt down to drink into another, and so separating the latter from the former. The number of those who licked the water into their mouth with their hand amounted to 300, and all the rest knelt down to drink. "*To lick with their hand to their mouth*," *i.e.* to take the water from the brook with the hollow of their hand, and lap it into the mouth with their tongue as a dog does, is only a more distinct expression for "licking with the tongue." The 300 men who quenched their thirst in this manner were certainly not the cowardly or indolent who did not kneel down to drink in the ordinary way, either from indolence or fear, as *Josephus*, *Theodoret*, and others supposed, but rather the bravest,—namely those who, when they reached a brook before the battle, did not allow themselves time to kneel down and satisfy their thirst in the most convenient manner, but simply took up some water with their hands as they stood in their military accoutrements, to strengthen themselves for the battle, and then proceeded without delay against the foe. By such a sign as this, *Bertheau* supposes that even an ordinary general might have been able to recognise the bravest of his army. No doubt: but if this account had not been handed down, it is certain that it would never have occurred to an ordinary or even a distinguished general to adopt such a method of putting the bravery of his troops to the test; and even Gideon, the hero of God, would never have thought of diminishing still further through such a trial an army which had already become so small,

or of attempting to defeat an army of more than 100,000 men by a few hundred of the bravest men, if the Lord himself had not commanded it.

Whilst the Lord was willing to strengthen the feeble faith of Gideon by the sign with the fleece of wool, and thus to raise him up to full confidence in the divine omnipotence, He also required of him, when thus strengthened, an attestation of his faith, by the purification of his army, that he might give the whole glory to Him, and accept the victory over that great multitude from His hand alone.—Ver. 7. After his fighting men had been divided into a small handful of 300 men on the one hand, and the large host of 9700 on the other, by the fulfilment of the command of God, the Lord required of him that he should send away the latter, "every man to his place," *i.e.* to his own home, promising that He would save Israel by the 300 men, and deliver the Midianites into their hand. The promise preceded the command, to render it easier to Gideon to obey it. "*All the people*," after taking out the 300 men, that is to say, the 9700 that remained.—Ver. 8. "*So they* (the 300 picked men) *took the provision of the people in their hand, and their* (the people's) *trumpets* (the suffix points back to הָעָם, the people); *and all the men of Israel* (the 9700) *he had sent away every one to his tents, i.e.* to his home (see at Deut. xvi. 7), *and the three hundred men he had kept by himself; but the camp of the Midianites was below to him in the valley.*" These words bring the preparations for the battle to a close, and the last clause introduces the ensuing conflict and victory. In the first clause הָעָם (the people) cannot be the subject, partly because of the actual sense, since the 300 warriors, who are no doubt the persons intended (cf. ver. 16), cannot be called "the people," in distinction from "all the men of Israel," and partly also because of the expression אֶת־צֵדָה, which would be construed in that case without any article in violation of the ordinary rule. We must rather read אֶת־צֵדַת הָעָם, as the LXX. and the Chaldee have done. The 300 men took the provision of the people, *i.e.* provision for the war, from the people who had been sent away, and the war-trumpets; so that every one of the 300 had a trumpet now, and as the provision of the people was also probably kept in vessels or pitchers (*caddim:* ver. 16), a jug as well. The subject to יִקְחוּ is to be taken from the first clause of the seventh verse. The sentences which follow from וְאֵת כָּל־אִישׁ are circumstantial clauses, introduced to bring out distinctly the situation in which Gideon was now placed. חָזַק בְּ, the opposite of שִׁלַּח, to send

away, signifies to hold fast, to keep back or by himself, as in Ex. ix. 2. לוֹ, to him, Gideon, who was standing by the fountain of Harod with his 300 men, the situation of Midian was underneath in the valley (see ver. 1, and chap. vi. 33).

Vers. 9–22. GIDEON'S BATTLE AND VICTORY.—Vers. 9–11*a*. The following night the Lord commanded Gideon to go down to the camp of the enemy, as He had given it into his hand (the perfect is used to denote the purpose of God which had already been formed, as in chap. iv. 14). But in order to fill him with confidence for such an enterprise, which to all human appearance was a very rash one, God added, "*If thou art afraid to go down, go thou with thine attendant Purah down to the camp, and thou wilt hear what they say, and thy hands will thereby become strong.*" The meaning of the protasis is not, If thou art afraid to go down into the camp of the enemy alone, or to visit the enemy unarmed, take Purah thine armour-bearer with thee, to make sure that thou hast weapons to use (*Bertheau*); for, apart from the fact that the addition "unarmed" is perfectly arbitrary, the apodosis "thou wilt see," etc., by no means agrees with this explanation. The meaning is rather this: Go with thy 300 men into (בְּ) the hostile camp to smite it, for I have given it into thy hand; but if thou art afraid to do this, go down with thine attendant to (אֶל) the camp, to ascertain the state and feeling of the foe, and thou wilt hear what they say, *i.e.*, as we gather from what follows, how they are discouraged, have lost all hope of defeating you, and from that thou wilt gather courage and strength for the battle. On the expression "*thine hands shall be strengthened*," see 2 Sam. ii. 7. The expression which follows, וְיָרַדְתָּ בַּמַּחֲנֶה, is not a mere repetition of the command to go down with his attendant to the hostile camp, but describes the result of the stimulus given to his courage: And then thou wilt go fearlessly into the hostile camp to attack the foe. יָרַד בַּמַּחֲנֶה (vers. 9, 11) is to be distinguished from יָרַד אֶל־הַמַּחֲנֶה in ver. 10. The former signifies to go down into the camp to smite the foe; the latter, to go down to the camp to reconnoitre it, and is equivalent to the following clause: "he went to the outside of the camp."—Vers. 11*b*–14. But when Gideon came with his attendant to the end of the armed men (*chamushim*, as in Josh. i. 14, Ex. xiii. 18) in the hostile camp, and the enemy were lying spread out with their camels in the valley, an innumerable multitude, he heard one (of the fighting men) relate to his fellow (*i.e.* to another) a dream which he

had had: "*Behold a cake of barley bread was rolling into the camp of Midian, and it came to the tent and smote it, so that it fell and turned upwards, and the tent lay along.*" Then the other replied, "*This is nothing else than the sword of Gideon the son of Joash the Israelite: God hath given Midian and all the camp into his hand.*" "The end of fighting men" signifies the outermost or foremost of the outposts in the enemy's camp, which contained not only fighting men, but the whole of the baggage of the enemy, who had invaded the land as nomads, with their wives, their children, and their flocks. In ver. 12, the innumerable multitude of the enemy is described once more in the form of a circumstantial clause, as in chap. vi. 5, not so much to distinguish the fighting men from the camp generally, as to bring out more vividly the contents and meaning of the following dream. The comparison of the enemy to the sand by the sea-side recalls Josh. xi. 4, and is frequently met with (see Gen. xxii. 17, xxxii. 13; 1 Sam. xiii. 5). With the word וַיָּבֹא in ver. 13, the thread of the narrative, which was broken off by the circumstantial clause in ver. 12, is resumed and carried further. The ἅπ. λεγ. צְלִיל (*Keri*, צְלִיל) is rendered *cake, placenta*, by the early translators: see *Ges.* Thes. p. 1170. The derivation of the word has been disputed, and is by no means certain, as צָלַל does not give any suitable meaning, either in the sense of to ring or to be overshadowed, and the meaning to roll (*Ges. l. c.*) cannot be philologically sustained; whilst צָלָה, to roast, can hardly be thought of, since this is merely used to denote the roasting of flesh, and קָלָה was the word commonly applied to the roasting of grains, and even "the roasted of barley bread" would hardly be equivalent to *subcinericeus panis ex hordeo* (*Vulgate*). "*The tent*," with the definite article, is probably the principal tent in the camp, *i.e.* the tent of the general. לְמַעְלָה, upwards, so that the bottom came to the top. "*The tent lay along*," or the tent fell, lay in ruins, is added to give emphasis to the words. "*This is nothing if not*," *i.e.* nothing but. The cake of bread which had rolled into the Midianitish camp and overturned the tent, signifies nothing else than the sword of Gideon, *i.e.* Gideon, who is bursting into the camp with his sword, and utterly destroying it.

This interpretation of the dream was certainly a natural one under the circumstances. Gideon is especially mentioned simply as the leader of the Israelites; whilst the loaf of barley bread, which was the food of the poorer classes, is to be regarded as strictly speaking the symbol of Israel, which was so despised among the nations. The rising of the Israelites under Gideon had

not remained a secret to the Midianites, and no doubt filled them with fear; so that in a dream this fear might easily assume the form of the defeat or desolation and destruction of their camp by Gideon. And the peculiar form of the dream is also psychologically conceivable. As the tent is everything to a nomad, he might very naturally picture the cultivator of the soil as a man whose life is all spent in cultivating and baking bread. In this way bread would become almost involuntarily a symbol of the cultivator of the soil, whilst in his own tent he would see a symbol not only of his mode of life, but of his freedom, greatness, and power. If we add to this, that the free pastoral tribes, particularly the Bedouins of Arabia, look down with pride not only upon the poor tillers of the soil, but even upon the inhabitants of towns, and that in Palestine, the land of wheat, none but the poorer classes feed upon barley bread, we have here all the elements out of which the dream of the Midianitish warrior was formed. The Israelites had really been crushed by the Midianites into a poor nation of slaves. But whilst the dream itself admits of being explained in this manner in a perfectly natural way, it acquires the higher supernatural character of a divine inspiration, from the fact that God not only foreknew it, but really caused the Midianite to dream, and to relate the dream to his comrade, just at the time when Gideon had secretly entered the camp, so that he should hear it, and discover therefrom, as God had foretold him, the despondency of the foe. Under these circumstances, Gideon could not fail to regard the dream as a divine inspiration, and to draw the assurance from it, that God had certainly given the Midianites into his hands.—Vers. 15-18. When therefore he had heard the dream related and interpreted, he worshipped, praising the Lord with joy, and returned to the camp to attack the enemy without delay. He then divided the 300 men into three companies, *i.e.* three attacking columns, and gave them all trumpets and empty pitchers, with torches in the pitchers in their hands. The pitchers were taken that they might hide the burning torches in them during their advance to surround the enemy's camp, and then increase the noise at the time of the attack, by dashing the pitchers to pieces (ver. 20), and thus through the noise, as well as the sudden lighting up of the burning torches, deceive the enemy as to the strength of the army. At the same time he commanded them, "*See from me, and do likewise*,"—a short expression for, As ye see me do, so do ye also (כֵּן, without the previous כְּ, or כַּאֲשֶׁר, as in chap. v. 15; see *Ewald*, § 260, *a.*),—"*I blow the trumpet, I and*

*all who are with me; ye also blow the trumpets round about the entire camp,*" which the 300 men divided into three companies were to surround, "*and say, To the Lord and Gideon.*" According to ver. 20, this war-cry ran fully thus: "*Sword to* (for) *the Lord and Gideon.*" This addition in ver. 20, however, does not warrant us in inserting "*chereb*" (sword) in the text here, as some of the early translators and MSS. have done.[1]—Ver. 19. Gideon then proceeded with the 100 who were with him, *i.e.* the company which was led by himself personally, to the end of the hostile camp, at the beginning of the middle watch, *i.e.* at midnight. רֹאשׁ is an accusative defining the time: see *Ges.* § 118, 2, and *Ewald*, § 204, *a.* The only other watch that is mentioned in the Old Testament beside the middle night-watch, is the morning night-watch (Ex. xiv. 24; 1 Sam. xi. 11), from which it has been correctly inferred, that the Israelites divided the night into three night-watches. The division into four watches (Matt. xiv. 25; Mark vi. 48) was first adopted by the Jews from the Romans. "*They* (the Midianites) *had only* (just) *posted the watchmen* (of the middle watch),"—a circumstantial clause, introduced to give greater distinctness to the situation. When the first sentries were relieved, and the second posted, so that they thought they might make quite sure of their night's rest once more, Gideon and his host arrived at the end of the camp, and, as we must supply from the context, the other two hosts at two other ends of the camp, who all blew their trumpets, breaking the pitchers in their hands at the same time. The *inf. abs.* נָפוֹץ, as a continuation of the finite verb יִתְקְעוּ, indicates that the fact was contemporaneous with the previous one (see *Ewald*, § 351, *c.*).—Ver. 20. According to the command which they had received (ver. 17), the other two tribes followed his example. "*Then the three companies*

[1] Similar stratagems to the one adopted by Gideon here are recorded by *Polyænus* (Strateg. ii. c. 37) of Dicetas, at the taking of Heræa, and by *Plutarch* (*Fabius Max.* c. 6) of Hannibal, when he was surrounded and completely shut in by Fabius Maximus. An example from modern history is given by *Niebuhr* (Beschr. von Arabien, p. 304). About the middle of the eighteenth century two Arabian chiefs were fighting for the Imamate of Oman. One of them, Bel-Arab, besieged the other, Achmed ben Said, with four or five thousand men, in a small castle on the mountain. But the latter slipped out of the castle, collected together several hundred men, gave every soldier a sign upon his head, that they might be able to distinguish friends from foes, and sent small companies to all the passes. Every one had a trumpet to blow at a given signal, and thus create a noise at the same time on every side. The whole of the opposing army was thrown in this way into disorder, since they found all the passes occupied, and imagined the hostile army to be as great as the noise.

*blew the trumpets, broke the pitchers, and held the torches in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right to blow, and cried, Sword to the Lord and Gideon! And they stood every one in his place round about the camp,*" *sc.* without moving, so that the Midianites necessarily thought that there must be a numerous army advancing behind the torch-bearers. וַיָּרָץ וגו׳, "*and the whole army ran,*" *i.e.* there began a running hither and thither in the camp of the enemy, who had been frightened out of their night's rest by the unexpected blast of the trumpets, the noise, and the war-cry of the Israelitish warriors; "*and they* (the enemy) *lifted up a cry* (of anguish and alarm), *and caused to fly*" (carried off), *sc.* their tents (*i.e.* their families) and their herds, or all their possessions (cf. chap. vi. 11, Ex. ix. 20). The *Chethibh* יָנִיסוּ is the original reading, and the *Keri* יָנוּסוּ a bad emendation.—Ver. 22. Whilst the 300 men blew their trumpets, "*Jehovah set the sword of one against the other, and against the whole camp,*" *i.e.* caused one to turn his sword against the other and against all the camp, that is to say, not merely man against man, but against every one in the camp, so that there arose a terrible slaughter throughout the whole camp. The first clause, "*and the three hundred blew the trumpets,*" simply resumes the statement in ver. 20, "the three companies blew the trumpets," for the purpose of appending to it the further progress of the attack, and the result of the battle. *Bertheau* inserts in a very arbitrary manner the words, "the second time." His explanation of the next clause ("then the 300 fighting men of Gideon drew the sword at Jehovah's command, every man against his man") is still more erroneous, since it does violence to the constant usage of the expression אִישׁ בְּרֵעֵהוּ (see 1 Sam xiv. 20, 2 Chron. xx. 23, Isa. iii. 5, Zech. viii. 10). "*And all the camp of the Midianites fled to Beth-shittah to Zeredah, to the shore of Abel-meholah, over Tabbath.*" The situation of these places, which are only mentioned here, with the exception of Abel-meholah, the home of Elisha (1 Kings xix. 16, iv. 12), has not yet been determined. According to the Syriac, the Arabic, and some of the MSS., we should read *Zeredathah* instead of *Zererathah*, and *Zeredathah* is only another form for *Zarthan* (comp. 1 Kings vii. 46 with 2 Chron. iv. 17). This is favoured by the situation of *Zarthan* in the valley of the Jordan, probably near the modern *Kurn Sartabeh* (see p. 46), inasmuch as in all probability Beth-shittah and Abel-meholah are to be sought for in the valley of the Jordan; and according to ver. 24, the enemy fled to the Jordan. *Beth-shittah, i.e.* acacia-house, is not the same place

as the village of *Shutta* mentioned by *Robinson* (iii. p. 219), since this village, according to *Van de Velde's* map, was to the north of Gilboa. For although *Shutta* is favoured by the circumstance, that from a very ancient time there was a road running from Jezreel along the valley, between the so-called Little Hermon (Duhy) and the mountains of Gilboa, and past Beisan to the Jordan; and the valley of Jalud, on the northern side of which Shutta was situated, may be regarded as the opening of the plain of Jezreel into the valley of the Jordan (see *v. Raumer*, Pal. p. 41, and *Rob.* iii. p. 176); and *v. Raumer* conjectures from this, that "the flight of the Midianites was apparently directed to Bethsean, on account of the nature of the ground,"—this assumption is rendered very questionable by the fact that the flying foe did not cross the Jordan in the neighbourhood of Beisan, but much farther to the south, viz., according to chap. viii. 4, in the neighbourhood of *Succoth*, which was on the south side of the Nahr Zerka (Jabbok). From this we are led to conjecture, that they were not encamped in the north-eastern part of the plain of Jezreel, in the neighbourhood of Jezreel (Zerin) and Shunem (Solam), but in the south-eastern part of this plain, and that after they had been beaten there they fled southwards from Gilboa, say from the district of Ginæa (Jenin) to the Jordan. In this case we have to seek for Abel-shittah on the south-east of the mountains of Gilboa, to the north of Zeredathah (Zarthan). From this point they fled on still farther to the "*shore of Abel-meholah.*" שְׂפָה does not mean boundary, but brink; here the bank of the Jordan, like שְׂפַת הַיַּרְדֵּן in 2 Kings ii. 13. The bank or strand of *Abel-meholah* is that portion of the western bank of the Jordan or of the Ghor, above which Abel-meholah was situated. According to the *Onom.* (*s. v.* Ἀβελμαελαί, *Abelmaula*), this place was in the *Aulon* (or Ghor), ten Roman miles to the south of Scythopolis (Beisan), and was called at that time Βηθμαιελά or *Bethaula.* According to this statement, *Abel-meholah* would have to be sought for near *Churbet es Shuk*, in the neighbourhood of the Wady *Maleh* (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 280). And lastly, *Tabbath* must have been situated somewhere to the south of Abel-meholah.

Ver. 23–chap. viii. 3. *Pursuit of the Enemy as far as the Jordan.* —Ver. 23. As soon as the Midianites had been put to flight, the Israelitish men of Naphtali, Asher, and Manasseh, let themselves be convened for the purpose of pursuing them: *i.e.* the men of these tribes, whom Gideon had sent away before the battle, and who were on their way home, could be summoned back again in

a very short time to join in the pursuit of the flying foe. The omission of Zebulun (chap. vi. 35) is, in all probability, simply to be attributed to the brevity of the account.—Vers. 24, 25. In order to cut off the retreat of the enemy who was flying to the Jordan, Gideon sent messengers into the whole of the mountains of Ephraim with this appeal to the Ephraimites, "*Come down* (from your mountains into the lowlands of the Jordan) *to meet Midian, and take the waters from them to Bethbarah and the Jordan,*" *sc.* by taking possession of this district (see chap. iii. 28). "*The waters,*" mentioned before the Jordan and distinguished from it, must have been streams across which the flying foe would have to cross to reach the Jordan, namely, the different brooks and rivers, such as Wady *Maleh*, *Fyadh*, *Jamel*, *Tubâs*, etc., which flowed down from the eastern side of the mountains of Ephraim into the Jordan, and ran through the Ghor to Bethbarah. The situation of *Bethbarah* is unknown. Even *Eusebius* could say nothing definite concerning the place; and the conjecture that it is the same as Bethabara, which has been regarded ever since the time of Origen as the place mentioned in John i. 28 where John baptized, throws no light upon the subject, as the situation of Bethabara is also unknown, to say nothing of the fact that the identity of the two names is very questionable. The Ephraimites responded to this appeal and took possession of the waters mentioned, before the Midianites, who could only move slowly with their flocks and herds, were able to reach the Jordan. They then captured two of the princes of the Midianites and put them to death: one of them, *Oreb*, *i.e.* the raven, at the rock *Oreb;* the other, *Zeeb*, *i.e.* the wolf, at the wine-press of *Zeeb*. Nothing further is known about these two places. The rock of *Oreb* is only mentioned again in Isa. x. 26, when the prophet alludes to this celebrated victory. So much, however, is evident from the verse before us, viz. that the Midianites were beaten by the Ephraimites at both places, and that the two princes fell there, and the places received their names from that circumstance. They were not situated in the land to the east of the Jordan, as *Gesenius* (on Isa. x. 26), *Rosenmüller*, and others infer from the fact that the Ephraimites brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon מֵעֵבֶר לַיַּרְדֵּן (ver. 25), but on the western side of the Jordan, where the Ephraimites had taken possession of the waters and the Jordan in front of the Midianites. מֵעֵבֶר לַיַּרְדֵּן does not mean "from the other side of the Jordan," but simply "*on the other side of* (beyond) *the Jordan,*" as in Josh. xiii. 32, xviii. 7, 1

Kings xiv. 15; and the statement here is not that the Ephraimites brought the heads from the other side to Gideon on the west of the river, but that they brought them to Gideon when he was in the land to the east of the Jordan. This explanation of the words is required by the context, as well as by the foregoing remark, "they pursued Midian," according to which the Ephraimites continued the pursuit of the Midianites after slaying these princes, and also by the complaint brought against Gideon by the Ephraimites, which is not mentioned till afterwards (chap. viii. 1 sqq.), that he had not summoned them to the war. It is true, this is given before the account of Gideon's crossing over the Jordan (chap. viii. 4), but in order of time it did not take place till afterwards, and, as *Bertheau* has correctly shown, the historical sequence is somewhat anticipated.

Chap. viii. 1–3. When the Ephraimites met with Gideon, after they had smitten the Midianites at Oreb and Zeeb, and were pursuing them farther, they said to him, "*What is the thing that thou hast done to us* (*i.e.* what is the reason for your having done this to us), *not to call us when thou wentest forth to make war upon Midian? And they did chide with him sharply*," less from any dissatisfied longing for booty, than from injured pride or jealousy, because Gideon had made war upon the enemy and defeated them without the co-operation of this tribe, which was striving for the leadership. Gideon's reply especially suggests the idea of injured ambition: "*What have I now done like you?*" *i.e.* as if I had done as great things as you. "*Is not the gleaning of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abiezer?*" The gleaning of Ephraim is the victory gained over the flying Midianites. Gideon declares this to be better than the vintage of Abiezer, *i.e.* the victory obtained by him the Abiezrite with his 300 men, because the Ephraimites had slain two Midianitish princes. The victory gained by the Ephraimites must indeed have been a very important one, as it is mentioned by Isaiah (x. 26) as a great blow of the Lord upon Midian. "*And what could I do like you?*" *i.e.* could I accomplish such great deeds as you? "*Then their anger turned away from him.*" רוּחַ, the breathing of the nose, snorting, hence "*anger*," as in Isa. xxv. 4, etc.

*Pursuit of the Midianites. Other Acts of Gideon; his Appointment as Judge.*—Chap. viii. 4–35.

Vers. 4–12. PURSUIT AND COMPLETE OVERTHROW OF THE MIDIANITES.—That the Midianites whom God had delivered into

his hand might be utterly destroyed, Gideon pursued those who had escaped across the Jordan, till he overtook them on the eastern boundary of Gilead and smote them there.—Vers. 4, 5. When he came to the Jordan with his three hundred men, who were exhausted with the pursuit, he asked the inhabitants of Succoth for loaves of bread for the people in his train. So far as the construction is concerned, the words from עֹבֵר to וְרֹדְפִים form a circumstantial clause inserted as a parenthesis into the principal sentence, and subordinate to it: "*When Gideon came to the Jordan, passing over he and the three hundred men . . . then he said to the men of Succoth.*" "*Exhausted and pursuing*," *i.e.* exhausted with pursuing. The *vav* is explanatory, *lit.* "and indeed pursuing," for "because he pursued." The rendering πεινῶντες adopted by the LXX. in the *Cod. Alex.* is merely an arbitrary rendering of the word רֹדְפִים, and without any critical worth. Gideon had crossed the Jordan, therefore, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Succoth. Succoth was upon the eastern side of the valley of the Jordan (Josh. xiii. 27), not opposite to Bethshean, but, according to Gen. xxxiii. 17, on the south side of the Jabbok (Zerka).—Ver. 6. The princes of Succoth, however, showed so little sympathy and nationality of feeling, that instead of taking part in the attack upon the enemies of Israel, they even refused to supply bread to refresh their brethren of the western tribes who were exhausted with the pursuit of the foe. They said (the sing. וַיֹּאמֶר may be explained on the ground that one spoke in the name of all: see *Ewald*, § 319, *a.*), "*Is the fist of Zebah and Zalmunna already in thy hand* (power), *that we should give thine army bread?*" In these words there is not only an expression of cowardice, or fear of the vengeance which the Midianites might take when they returned upon those who had supported Gideon and his host, but contempt of the small force which Gideon had, as if it were impossible for him to accomplish anything at all against the foe; and in this contempt they manifested their utter want of confidence in God.—Ver. 7. Gideon threatened them, therefore, with severe chastisement in the event of a victorious return. "*If Jehovah give Zebah and Zalmunna into my hand, I will thresh your flesh* (your body) *with desert thorns and thistles.*" The verb דּוּשׁ, constructed with a double accusative (see *Ewald*, § 283, *a.*), is used in a figurative sense: "to thresh," in other words, to punish severely. "Thorns of the desert" are strong thorns, as the desert is the natural soil for thorn-bushes. The ἅπ. λεγ. בִּרְקָנִים also signifies prickly plants, according to the

early versions and the Rabbins, probably "such as grow upon stony ground" (*Bertheau*). The explanation "threshing machines with stones or flints underneath them," which was suggested by *J. D. Michaelis* and *Celsius*, and adopted by *Gesenius*, cannot be sustained.—Vers. 8, 9. The inhabitants of Pnuel on the north bank of the Jabbok (see at Gen. xxxii. 24 sqq.) behaved in the same churlish manner to Gideon, and for this he also threatened them: "*If I return in peace*," *i.e.* unhurt, "*I will destroy this tower*" (probably the castle of Pnuel).—Vers. 10–12. The Midianitish kings were at *Karkor* with all the remnant of their army, about fifteen thousand men, a hundred and twenty thousand having already fallen. Gideon followed them thither by the road of the dwellers in tents on the east of *Nobah* and *Jogbeha*; and falling upon them unawares, smote the whole camp, which thought itself quite secure, and took the two kings prisoners, after discomfiting all the camp. The situation of *Karkor*, which is only mentioned here, cannot be determined with certainty. The statement of *Eusebius* and *Jerome* (*Onom. s. v. Καρκὰ, Carcar*), that it was the castle of *Carcaria*, a day's journey from *Petra*, is decidedly wrong, since this castle is much too far to the south, as *Gesenius* (Thes. p. 1210) has shown. *Karkor* cannot have been very far from *Nobah* and Jogbeha. These two places are probably preserved in the ruins of *Nowakis* and *Jebeiha*, on the north-west of *Ammân* (*Rabbath-ammon*; see at Num. xxi. 31). Now, as *Burckhardt* (Syr. p. 612) also mentions a ruin in the neighbourhood, called *Karkagheisch*, on the left of the road from Szalt to Ammân, and at the most an hour and a half to the north-west of Ammân, *Knobel* (on Num. xxxii. 42) is inclined to regard this ruin as *Karkor*. If this supposition could be proved to be correct, Gideon would have fallen upon the camp of the enemy from the north-east. For "*the way of the dwellers in tents on the east of Nobah and Jogbeha*" cannot well be any other than the way which ran to the east of Nobah and Jogbeha, past the most easterly frontier city of the Gadites, to the nomads who dwelt in the desert. הַשֹּׁכְנִי בְאֹהָלִים has the article attached to the governing noun, which may easily be explained in this instance from the intervening preposition. The passive participle שָׁכֻן has an intransitive force (see *Ewald*, § 149, *a.*). The verb הֶחֱרִיד in the circumstantial clause acquires the force of the pluperfect from the context. When he had startled the camp out of its security, having alarmed it by his unexpected attack, he succeeded in taking the two kings prisoners.

Vers. 13–21. PUNISHMENT OF THE TOWNS OF SUCCOTH AND PNUEL, AND EXECUTION OF THE CAPTURED KINGS OF MIDIAN. —Vers. 13, 14. Gideon returned victorious from the war, מִלְּמַעֲלֵה הַחֶרֶס, "*from by the ascent (or mountain road) of Hecheres*," a place in front of the town of Succoth, with which we are not acquainted. This is the rendering adopted by the LXX., the Peshito, and the Arabic; but the rest of the early translators have merely guessed at the meaning. The *Chaldee*, which has been followed by the *Rabbins* and *Luther*, has rendered it "before sunset," in utter opposition to the rules of the language; for although *cheres* is a word used poetically to denote the sun, מַעֲלֵה cannot mean the setting of the sun. *Aquila* and *Symmachus*, on the other hand, confound חֶרֶס with הָרִים.—Gideon laid hold of a young man of the people of Succoth, and got him to write down for him the princes and elders (magistrates and rulers) of the city,—in all seventy-seven men. וַיִּשְׁאָלֵהוּ וַיִּכְתֹּב is a short expression for "he asked him the names of the princes and elders of the city, and the boy wrote them down." אֵלָיו, *lit.* to him, *i.e.* for him.—Vers. 15, 16. Gideon then reproached the elders with the insult they had offered him (ver. 6), and had them punished with desert thorns and thistles. "*Men of Succoth*" (vers. 15*a* and 16*b*) is a general expression for "elders of Succoth" (ver. 16*a*); and elders a general term applied to all the representatives of the city, including the princes. אֲשֶׁר חֵרַפְתֶּם אֹתִי, with regard to whom ye have despised me. אֲשֶׁר is the accusative of the more distant or second object, not the subject, as *Stud.* supposes. "*And he taught the men of Succoth* (*i.e.* caused them to know, made them feel, punished them) with them (the thorns)." There is no good ground for doubting the correctness of the reading וַיֹּדַע. The free renderings of the LXX., *Vulg.*, etc., are destitute of critical worth; and *Bertheau's* assertion, that if it were the *Hiphil* it would be written יֹדַע, is proved to be unfounded by the defective writing in Num. xvi. 5, Job xxxii. 7.—Ver. 17. Gideon also inflicted upon Pnuel the punishment threatened in ver. 9. The punishment inflicted by Gideon upon both the cities was well deserved in all respects, and was righteously executed. The inhabitants of these cities had not only acted treacherously to Israel as far as they could, from the most selfish interests, in a holy conflict for the glory of the Lord and the freedom of His people, but in their contemptuous treatment of Gideon and his host they had poured contempt upon the Lord, who had shown them to be His own soldiers before the eyes of the whole nation by the victory which He had given them

over the innumerable army of the foe. Having been called by the Lord to be the deliverer and judge of Israel, it was Gideon's duty to punish the faithless cities.—Vers. 18–21. After punishing these cities, Gideon repaid the two kings of Midian, who had been taken prisoners, according to their doings. From the judicial proceedings instituted with regard to them (vers. 18, 19), we learn that these kings had put the brothers of Gideon to death, and apparently not in open fight; but they had murdered them in an unrighteous and cruel manner. And Gideon made them atone for this with their own lives, according to the strict *jus talionis*. אֵיפֹה, in ver. 18, does not mean *where?* but "*in what condition, of what form, were the men whom ye slew at Tabor?*" *i.e.* either in the city of Tabor or at Mount Tabor (see chap. iv. 6, and Josh. xix. 22). The kings replied: "*As thou so they*" (those men), *i.e.* they were all as stately as thou art, "*every one like the form of kings' sons.*" אֶחָד, one, for every one, like אִישׁ אֶחָד in 2 Kings xv. 20, or more frequently אִישׁ alone. As the men who had been slain were Gideon's own brothers, he swore to those who had done the deed, *i.e.* to the two kings, "*As truly as Jehovah liveth, if ye had let them live I should not have put you to death;*" and then commanded his first-born son Jether to slay them, for the purpose of adding the disgrace of falling by the hand of a boy. "*But the boy drew not his sword from fear, because he was yet a boy.*" And the kings then said to Gideon, "*Rise thou and stab us, for as the man so is his strength,*" *i.e.* such strength does not belong to a boy, but to a man. Thereupon Gideon slew them, and took the little moons upon the necks of their camels as booty. "*The little moons*" were crescent-shaped ornaments of silver or gold, such as men and women wore upon their necks (see ver. 26, and Isa. iii. 18), and which they also hung upon the necks of camels,—a custom still prevalent in Arabia (see *Schröder, de vestitu mul. hebr.* pp. 39, 40, and *Wellsted, Reisen in Arab.* i. p. 209).

Vers. 22–32. GIDEON'S REMAINING ACTS, AND DEATH.—Vers. 22, 23. As Gideon had so gloriously delivered Israel from the severe and long oppression on the part of the Midianites, the Israelites offered him an hereditary crown. "*The men of Israel*" were hardly all the twelve tribes, but probably only the northern tribes of the western part of the land already mentioned in chap. vi. 35, who had suffered the most severely from the Midianitish oppression, and had been the first to gather round Gideon to make an attack upon the foe. The temptation to accept the government of Israel was resisted

by this warrior of God. "*Neither I nor my son shall rule over you; Jehovah shall rule over you,*" was his reply to this offer, containing an evident allusion to the destination and constitution of the tribes of Israel as a nation which Jehovah had chosen to be His own possession, and to which He had just made himself known in so conspicuous a manner as their omnipotent Ruler and King. This refusal of the regal dignity on the part of Gideon is not at variance with the fact, that Moses had already foreseen the possibility that at some future time the desire for a king would arise in the nation, and had given them a law for the king expressly designed for such circumstances as these (Deut. xvii. 14 sqq.). For Gideon did not decline the honour because Jehovah was King in Israel, *i.e.* because he regarded an earthly monarchy in Israel as irreconcilable with the heavenly monarchy of Jehovah, but simply because he thought the government of Jehovah in Israel amply sufficient, and did not consider either himself or his sons called to found an earthly monarchy.—Vers. 24 sqq. Gideon resisted the temptation to put an earthly crown upon his head, from true fidelity to Jehovah; but he yielded to another temptation, which this appeal on the part of the people really involved, namely, the temptation to secure to himself for the future the position to which the Lord had called and exalted him. The Lord had called him to be the deliverer of Israel by visibly appearing in His angel, and had not only accepted the gift which he offered Him, as a well-pleasing sacrifice, but had also commanded him to build an altar, and by offering an atoning burnt-sacrifice to re-establish the worship of Jehovah in his family and tribe, and to restore the favour of God to His people once more. Lastly, the Lord had made His will known to him again and again; whilst by the glorious victory which He had given to him and to his small band over the powerful army of the foe, He had confirmed him as His chosen servant to be the deliverer and judge of Israel. The relation which Gideon thus sustained to the Lord he imagined that he ought to preserve; and therefore, after declining the royal dignity, he said to the people, "*I will request of you one request, that ye give me every one the ring that he has received as booty.*" This request the historian explains by adding the remark: "*for they* (the enemy) *had golden rings, for they were Ishmaelites,*" from whom therefore the Israelites were able to get an abundance of rings as booty. *Ishmaelites* is the general name for the nomad tribes of Arabia, to whom the Midianites also belonged (as in Gen. xxxvii. 25).—Vers. 25, 26. This request of Gideon's was cheer-

fully fulfilled: "*They spread out the cloth* (brought for collecting the rings), *and threw into it every one the ring that he had received as booty.*" *Simlah*, the upper garment, was for the most part only a large square piece of cloth. The weight of these golden rings amounted to 1700 shekels, *i.e.* about 50 lbs., (לְבַד מִן) separate from, *i.e.* beside, the remaining booty, for which Gideon had not asked, and which the Israelites kept for themselves, viz. the little moons, the ear-pendants (*netiphoth, lit.* little drops, probably pearl-shaped ear-drops: see Isa. iii. 19), and the purple clothes which were worn by the kings of Midian (*i.e.* which they had on), and also apart from the neck-bands upon the necks of their camels. Instead of the *anakoth* or necklaces (ver. 26), the *saharonim*, or little moons upon the necks of the camels, are mentioned in ver. 21 as the more valuable portion of these necklaces. Even at the present day the Arabs are accustomed to ornament the necks of these animals "with a band of cloth or leather, upon which small shells called cowries are strung or sewed in the form of a crescent. The sheiks add silver ornaments to these, which make a rich booty in time of war" (*Wellsted*, Reise, i. p. 209). The Midianitish kings had their camels ornamented with golden crescents. This abundance of golden ornaments will not surprise us, when we consider that the Arabs still carry their luxurious tastes for such things to a very great excess. *Wellsted* (i. p. 224) states that "the women in Omân spend considerable amounts in the purchase of silver ornaments, and their children are literally laden with them. I have sometimes counted fifteen ear-rings upon each side; and the head, breast, arms, and ankles are adorned with the same profusion." As the Midianitish army consisted of 130,000 men, of whom 15,000 only remained at the commencement of the last engagement, the Israelites may easily have collected 5000 golden rings, or even more, which might weigh 1700 shekels.—Ver. 27. "*And Gideon made it into an ephod,*" *i.e.* used the gold of the rings obtained from the booty for making an ephod. There is no necessity, however, to understand this as signifying that 1700 shekels or 50 lbs. of gold had been used for the ephod itself, but simply that the making of the ephod was accomplished with this gold. The word *ephod* does not signify an image of Jehovah, or an idol, as *Gesenius* and others maintain, but the shoulder-dress of the high priest, no doubt including the *choshen* belonging to it, with the Urim and Thummim, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 3, xxi. 10, xxiii. 6, 9, etc. The material for this was worked throughout with gold threads; and in addition to that there were

precious stones set in gold braid upon the shoulder-pieces of the ephod and upon the choshen, and chains made of gold twist for fastening the choshen upon the ephod (see Ex. xxviii. 6–30). Now, if 50 lbs. of gold could not be used for these things, there were also fourteen precious stones to be procured, and the work itself to be paid for, so that 50 lbs. of gold might easily be devoted to the preparation of this state dress. The large quantity of gold, therefore, does not warrant us in introducing arbitrarily into the text the establishment of a formal sanctuary, and the preparation of a golden image of Jehovah in the form of a bull, as *Bertheau* has done, since there is no reference to פֶּסֶל or מַסֵּכָה, as in chap. xvii. xviii.; and even the other words of the text do not point to the founding of a sanctuary and the setting up of an image of Jehovah.[1] The expression which follows, וַיִּצֻּנֵּהוּ אֹתוֹ, does not affirm that "he set it up," but may also mean, "*he kept it in his city of Ophrah.*" הִצִּיג is never used to denote the setting up of an image or statue, and signifies not only to put up, but also to lay down (*e.g.* chap. vi. 37), and to let a thing stand, or leave behind (Gen. xxxiii. 15). The further remark of the historian, "*and all Israel went thither a whoring after it, and it became a snare to Gideon and his house,*" does not presuppose the founding of a sanctuary or temple in Ophrah, and the setting up of a golden calf there. In what the whoring of Israel after the ephod, *i.e.* the idolatry of the Israelites with Gideon's ephod which was kept in Ophrah, consisted, cannot be gathered or determined from the use of the ephod in the worship of Jehovah under the Mosaic law. "The breastplate upon the coat, and the holy lot, were no doubt used in connection with idolatry" (*Oehler*), and Gideon had an ephod made in his town of Ophrah, that he might thereby obtain revelations from the Lord. We certainly are not for a moment to think of an exposure of the holy coat for the people to worship. It is far more probable that Gideon put on the ephod and wore it as a priest, when he wished to inquire and learn the will of the Lord. It is possible that he also sacrificed to the Lord upon the altar that was built at Ophrah (chap. vi. 24). The motive by which he was led to do this was certainly not merely ambition,

[1] *Oehler* has correctly observed in *Herzog's* Cyclopædia, that *Bertheau* acts very arbitrarily when he represents Gideon as setting up the image of a bull, as Jeroboam did afterwards, since there is nothing to sustain it in the account itself. Why cannot Gideon have worshipped without any image of Jehovah, with the help of the altar mentioned in chap. vi. 24, which was a symbol of Jehovah's presence, and remained standing till the historian's own time?

as *Bertheau* supposes, impelling the man who, along with his followers, had maintained an independent attitude towards the tribe of Ephraim in the war itself (chap. viii. 1 sqq.), to act independently of the common sanctuary of the congregation which was within the territory of Ephraim, and also of the office of the high priest in the time of peace as well. For there is not the slightest trace to be found of such ambition as this in anything that he did during the conflict with the Midianites. The germs of Gideon's error, which became a snare to him and to his house, lie unquestionably deeper than this, namely, in the fact that the high-priesthood had probably lost its worth in the eyes of the people on account of the worthlessness of its representatives, so that they no longer regarded the high priest as the sole or principal medium of divine revelation; and therefore Gideon, to whom the Lord had manifested himself directly, as He had not to any judge or leader of the people since the time of Joshua, might suppose that he was not acting in violation of the law, when he had an ephod made, and thus provided himself with a substratum or vehicle for inquiring the will of the Lord. His sin therefore consisted chiefly in his invading the prerogative of the *Aaronic* priesthood, drawing away the people from the one legitimate sanctuary, and thereby not only undermining the theocratic unity of Israel, but also giving an impetus to the relapse of the nation into the worship of Baal after his death. This sin became a snare to him and to his house.

The history of Gideon is concluded in vers. 28–32.—Ver. 28. The Midianites had been so humiliated that they lifted up their head no more, and the land of Israel had rest forty years "*in the days of Gideon*," *i.e.* as long as Gideon lived.—Vers. 29 sqq. Before the account of his death, a few other notices respecting his family are introduced for the purpose of preparing the way for the following history of the doings of his sons, in which the sin of Gideon came to a head, and the judgment burst upon his house. "*And Jerubbaal, the son of Joash, went and dwelt in his house.*" Both the word וַיֵּלֶךְ, which simply serves to bring out the fact more vividly (see the remarks on Ex. ii. 1), and also the choice of the name *Jerubbaal*, merely serve to give greater prominence to the change, from the heat of the war against the Midianites to the quiet retirement of domestic life. Instead of accepting the crown that was offered him and remaining at the head of the nation, the celebrated Baal-fighter retired into private life again. In addition to the seventy sons of his many wives, there was a son born to him by a

concubine, who lived at Shechem and is called his maid-servant in chap. ix. 18, and to this son he gave the name of *Abimelech, i.e.* king's father. וַיָּשֶׂם אֶת־שְׁמוֹ is not the same as קָרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ, to give a person a name, but signifies to add a name, or give a surname (see Neh. ix. 7, and Dan. v. 12 in the Chaldee). It follows from this, that Abimelech received this name from Gideon as a cognomen answering to his character, and therefore not at the time of his birth, but when he grew up and manifested such qualities as led to the expectation that he would be a king's father.—Ver. 32. Gideon died at a good old age (see Gen. xv. 15, xxv. 8), and therefore also died a peaceful death (not so his sons; see chap. ix.), and was buried in his father's grave at Ophrah (chap. vi. 11).

Vers. 33–35 form the introduction to the history of Gideon's sons.—Ver. 33. After Gideon's death the Israelites fell once more into the Baal-worship which Gideon had rooted out of his father's city (chap. vi. 25 sqq.), and worshipped *Baal-berith* as their God. *Baal-berith*, the covenant Baal (equivalent to *El-berith*, the covenant god, chap. ix. 46), is not Baal as the god of covenants, but, according to Gen. xiv. 13, Baal as a god in covenant, *i.e.* Baal with whom they had made a covenant, just as the Israelites had their faithful covenant God in Jehovah (see *Movers*, Phöniz. i. p. 171). The worship of Baal-berith, as performed at Shechem according to chap. ix. 46, was an imitation of the worship of Jehovah, an adulteration of that worship, in which Baal was put in the place of Jehovah (see *Hengstenberg*, Dissertations on the Pentateuch, vol. ii. p. 81).—Vers. 34, 35. In this relapse into the worship of Baal they not only forgot Jehovah, their Deliverer from all their foes, but also the benefits which they owed to Gideon, and showed no kindness to his house in return for all the good which he had shown to Israel. The expression *Jerubbaal-Gideon* is chosen by the historian here, not for the purely outward purpose of laying express emphasis upon the identity of Gideon and Jerubbaal (*Bertheau*), but to point to what Gideon, the Baal-fighter, had justly deserved from the people of Israel.

*Judgment upon the House of Gideon, or Abimelech's Sins and End.* —Chap. ix.

After the death of Gideon, Abimelech, his bastard son, opened a way for himself to reign as king over Israel, by murdering his brethren with the help of the Shechemites (vers. 1–6). For this grievous wrong Jotham, the only one of Gideon's seventy sons who

escaped the massacre, reproached the citizens of Shechem in a parable, in which he threatened them with punishment from God (vers. 7–21), which first of all fell upon Shechem within a very short time (vers. 22–49), and eventually reached Abimelech himself (vers. 50–57).

Vers. 1–6. Having gone to Shechem, the home of his mother (chap. viii. 31), Abimelech applied to his mother's brothers and the whole family (all the relations) of the father's house of his mother, and addressed them thus: "*Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the lords of Shechem*," *i.e.* speak to them publicly and solemnly. בַּעֲלֵי שְׁכֶם, the lords, *i.e.* the possessors or citizens of Shechem (compare ver. 46 with ver. 49, where בַּעֲלֵי מִגְדַּל is interchangeable with אַנְשֵׁי מִגְדַּל; also chap. xx. 5, and Josh. xxiv. 11): they are not merely Canaanitish citizens, of whom there were some still living in Shechem according to ver. 28, but all the citizens of the town; therefore chiefly Israelites. "*What is better for you, that seventy men rule over you, all the sons of Jerubbaal, or* (only) *one man* (*i.e.* Abimelech)? *and remember that I am your flesh and bone*" (blood relation, Gen. xxix. 14). The name "sons of Jerubbaal," *i.e.* of the man who had destroyed the altar of Baal, was just as little adapted to commend the sons of Gideon to the Shechemites, who were devoted to the worship of Baal, as the remark that seventy men were to rule over them. No such rule ever existed, or was even aspired to by the seventy sons of Gideon. But Abimelech assumed that his brothers possessed the same thirst for ruling as he did himself; and the citizens of Shechem might be all the more ready to put faith in his assertions, since the distinction which Gideon had enjoyed was thoroughly adapted to secure a prominent place in the nation for his sons.—Ver. 3. When his mother's brethren spake to the citizens of Shechem concerning him, *i.e.* respecting him and his proposal, their heart turned to Abimelech. —Ver. 4. They gave him seventy shekels of silver from the house of Baal-berith, *i.e.* from the treasury of the temple that was dedicated to the covenant Baal at Shechem, as temple treasures were frequently applied to political purposes (see 1 Kings xv. 18). With this money Abimelech easily hired light and desperate men, who followed him (attached themselves to him); and with their help he murdered his brethren at Ophrah, seventy men, with the exception of Jotham the youngest, who had hidden himself. The number seventy, the total number of his brethren, is reduced by the exception mentioned immediately afterwards to sixty-nine who were

really put to death. רֵיק, *empty, i.e.* without moral restraint. בֹּחֵז, *lit.* gurgling up, boiling over; figuratively, *hot, desperate men.* "*Upon* (against) *one stone*," that is to say, by a formal execution: a bloody omen of the kingdom of the ten tribes, which was afterwards founded at Shechem by the Ephraimite Jeroboam, in which one dynasty overthrew another, and generally sought to establish its power by exterminating the whole family of the dynasty that had been overthrown (see 1 Kings xv. 27 sqq., 2 Kings x. 1 sqq.). Even in Judah, Athaliah the worshipper of Baal sought to usurp the government by exterminating the whole of the descendants of her son (2 Kings xi.). Such fratricides have also occurred in quite recent times in the Mohammedan countries of the East.—Ver. 6. "*Then all the citizens of Shechem assembled together, and all the house of Millo, and made Abimelech king at the memorial terebinth at Shechem.*" *Millo* is unquestionably the name of the castle or citadel of the town of Shechem, which is called the tower of Shechem in vers. 46–49. The word *Millo* (Chaldee מִלְּיָתָא) signifies primarily a rampart, inasmuch as it consisted of two walls, with the space between them filled with rubbish. There was also a *Millo* at Jerusalem (2 Sam. v. 9; 1 Kings ix. 15). "*All the house of Millo*" are all the inhabitants of the castle, the same persons who are described in ver. 46 as "all the men (*baale*) of the tower." The meaning of אֵלוֹן מְצַב is doubtful. מְצַב, the thing set up, is a military post in Isa. xxix. 3; but it may also mean a monument or memorial, and here it probably denotes the large stone set up as a memorial at Shechem under the oak or terebinth (see Gen. xxxv. 4). The inhabitants of Shechem, the worshippers of Baal-berith, carried out the election of Abimelech as king in the very same place in which Joshua had held the last national assembly, and had renewed the covenant of Israel with Jehovah the true covenant God (Josh. xxiv. 1, 25, 26). It was there in all probability that the temple of Baal-berith was to be found, namely, according to ver. 46, near the tower of Shechem or the citadel of Millo.

Vers. 7–21. When Jotham, who had escaped after the murder, was told of the election which had taken place, he went to the top of Mount Gerizim, which rises as a steep wall of rock to the height of about 800 feet above the valley of Shechem on the south side of the city (*Rob.* iii. p. 96), and cried with a loud voice, "*Hearken to me, ye lords of Shechem, and God will also hearken to you.*" After this appeal, which calls to mind the language of the prophets, he uttered aloud a fable of the trees which wanted to anoint a king

over them,—a fable of true prophetic significance, and the earliest with which we are acquainted (vers. 8–15). To the appeal which is made to them in succession to become king over the trees, the olive tree, the fig tree, and the vine all reply: Shall we give up our calling, to bear valuable fruits for the good and enjoyment of God and men, and soar above the other trees? The briar, however, to which the trees turn last of all, is delighted at the unexpected honour that is offered it, and says, "*Will ye in truth anoint me king over you? Then come and trust in my shadow; but if not, let fire go out of the briar and consume the cedars of Lebanon.*" The rare form מְלוֹכָה (*Chethib*, vers. 8, 12) also occurs in 1 Sam. xxviii. 8, Isa. xxxii. 11, Ps. xxvi. 2: see *Ewald*, § 228, *b.*). מָלְכִי (ver. 10) is also rare (see *Ewald*, § 226, *b.*). The form הֶחֳדַלְתִּי (vers. 9, 11, 13), which is quite unique, is not "*Hophal* or *Hiphil*, compounded of הֶהָחֳדָ' or הֶהֶחֱדָ'" (*Ewald*, § 51, *c.*), for neither the *Hophal* nor the *Hiphil* of חָדַל occurs anywhere else; but it is a simple *Kal*, and the obscure *o* sound is chosen instead of the *a* sound for the sake of euphony, *i.e.* to assist the pronunciation of the guttural syllables which follow one after another. The meaning of the fable is very easy to understand. The olive tree, fig tree, and vine do not represent different historical persons, such as the judges Othniel, Deborah, and Gideon, as the Rabbins affirm, but in a perfectly general way the nobler families or persons who bring forth fruit and blessing in the calling appointed them by God, and promote the prosperity of the people and kingdom in a manner that is well-pleasing to God and men. Oil, figs, and wine were the most valuable productions of the land of Canaan, whereas the briar was good for nothing but to burn. The noble fruit-trees would not tear themselves from the soil in which they had been planted and had borne fruit, to soar (נוּעַ, float about) above the trees, *i.e.* not merely to rule over the trees, but *obire et circumagi in rebus eorum curandis.* נוּעַ includes the idea of restlessness and insecurity of existence. The explanation given in the *Berleb.* Bible, "We have here what it is to be a king, to reign or be lord over many others, namely, very frequently to do nothing else than float about in such restlessness and distraction of thoughts, feelings, and desires, that very little good or sweet fruit ever falls to the ground," if not a truth without exception so far as royalty is concerned, is at all events perfectly true in relation to what Abimelech aimed at and attained, to be a king by the will of the people and not by the grace of God. Wherever the Lord does not found the

monarchy, or the king himself does not lay the foundations of his government in God and the grace of God, he is never anything but a tree, moving about above other trees without a firm root in a fruitful soil, utterly unable to bear fruit to the glory of God and the good of men. The expression "*all the trees*" is to be carefully noticed in ver. 14. "*All* the trees" say to the briar, Be king over us, whereas in the previous verse only "*the* trees" are mentioned. This implies that of all the trees not one was willing to be king himself, but that they were unanimous in transferring the honour to the briar. The briar, which has nothing but thorns upon it, and does not even cast sufficient shadow for any one to lie down in its shadow and protect himself from the burning heat of the sun, is an admirable simile for a worthless man, who can do nothing but harm. The words of the briar, "*Trust in my shadow*," seek refuge there, contain a deep irony, the truth of which the Shechemites were very soon to discover. "*And if not*," *i.e.* if ye do not find the protection you expect, fire will go out of the briar and consume the cedars of Lebanon, the largest and noblest trees. Thorns easily catch fire (see Ex. xxii. 5). The most insignificant and most worthless man can be the cause of harm to the mightiest and most distinguished.

In vers. 16–20 Jotham gives the application of his fable, for there was no necessity for any special explanation of it, since it was perfectly clear and intelligible in itself. These verses form a long period, the first half of which is so extended by the insertion of parentheses introduced as explanations (vers. 17, 18), that the commencement of it (ver. 16) is taken up again in ver. 19*a* for the purpose of attaching the apodosis. "*If ye have acted in truth and sincerity, and* (*i.e.* when ye) *made Abimelech king; if ye have done well to Jerubbaal and his house, and if ye have done to him according to the doing of his hands . . . as my father fought for you . . . but ye have risen up to-day against my father's house, and have slain . . . if* (I say) *ye have acted in truth and sincerity to Jerubbaal and his house this day: then rejoice in Abimelech. . . .*" הִשְׁלִיךְ נַפְשׁוֹ, to throw away his life, *i.e.* expose to death. מִנֶּגֶד, "*from before him*," serves to strengthen the הִשְׁלִיךְ. Jotham imputes the slaying of his brothers to the citizens of Shechem, as a crime which they themselves had committed (ver. 18), because they had given Abimelech money out of their temple of Baal to carry out his designs against the sons of Jerubbaal (ver. 4). In this reproach he had, strictly speaking, already pronounced sentence upon their doings. When, therefore,

he proceeds still further in ver. 19, "If ye have acted in truth towards Jerubbaal . . . then rejoice," etc., this turn contains the bitterest scorn at the faithlessness manifested towards Jerubbaal. In that case nothing could follow but the fulfilment of the threat and the bursting forth of the fire. In carrying out this point the application goes beyond the actual meaning of the parable itself. Not only will fire go forth from Abimelech and consume the lords of Shechem and the inhabitants of Millo, but fire will also go forth from them and devour Abimelech himself. The fulfilment of this threat was not long delayed, as the following history shows (vers. 23 sqq.).—Ver. 21. But Jotham fled to *Beer*, after charging the Shechemites with their iniquity, and dwelt there before his brother Abimelech ("before," *i.e.* "for fear of."—*Jerome*). *Beer* in all probability is not the same place as *Beeroth* in the tribe of Benjamin (Josh. ix. 17), but, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Βηρά*), a place eight Roman miles to the north of Eleutheropolis, situated in the plain; at present a desolate village called *el Bîreh*, near the mouth of the Wady es Surâr, not far from the former Beth-shemesh (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 132).

Vers. 22–24. Abimelech's reign lasted three years. וַיָּשַׂר, from שׂוּר, to govern, is used intentionally, as it appears, in the place of וַיִּמְלֹךְ, because Abimelech's government was not a monarchical reign, but simply a tyrannical despotism. "*Over Israel*," that is to say, not over the whole of the twelve tribes of Israel, but only over a portion of the nation, possibly the tribes of Ephraim and half Manasseh, which acknowledged his sway.—Vers. 23, 24. Then God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, so that they became treacherous towards him. "*An evil spirit*" is not merely "an evil disposition," but an evil demon, which produced discord and strife, just as an evil spirit came upon Saul (1 Sam. xvi. 14, 15, xviii. 10); not Satan himself, but a supernatural spiritual power which was under his influence. This evil spirit God sent to punish the wickedness of Abimelech and the Shechemites. *Elohim*, not *Jehovah*, because the working of the divine justice is referred to here. "*That the wickedness to the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might come, and their blood* (the blood of these sons that had been shed), *to lay it upon Abimelech.*" "*And their blood*" is only a more precise definition of "the wickedness to the seventy sons;" and "*to lay it*" is an explanation of the expression "might come." The introduction of לָשׂוּם, however, brings an *anakolouthon* into the construction, since the transitive שׂוּם presupposes *Elohim* as the

subject and דָּמָם as the object, whereas the parallel חֲמָס is the subject to the intransitive לָבוֹא: that the wickedness might come, and that God might lay the blood not only upon Abimelech, the author of the crime, but also upon the lords of Shechem, who had strengthened his hands to slay his brethren; had supported him by money, that he might be able to hire worthless fellows to execute his crime (vers. 4, 5).

Vers. 25–29. The faithlessness of the Shechemites towards Abimelech commenced by their placing liers in wait for him (לוֹ, *dat. incomm.*, to his disadvantage) upon the tops of the mountains (Ebal and Gerizim, between which Shechem was situated), who plundered every one who passed by them on the road. In what way they did harm to Abimelech by sending out liers in wait to plunder the passers-by, is not very clear from the brevity of the narrative. The general effect may have been, that they brought his government into discredit with the people by organizing a system of robbery and plunder, and thus aroused a spirit of discontent and rebellion. Possibly, however, these highway robbers were to watch for Abimelech himself, if he should come to Shechem, not only to plunder him, but, if possible, to despatch him altogether. This was made known to Abimelech. But before he had put down the brigandage, the treachery broke out into open rebellion.—Ver. 26. Gaal, the son of Ebed, came to Shechem with his brethren. עָבַר with בְּ, to pass over into a place. Who Gaal was, and whence he came, we are not informed. Many of the MSS. and early editions, *e.g.* the Syriac and Arabic, read "son of Eber," instead of "son of Ebed." Judging from his appearance in Shechem, he was a knight-errant, who went about the country with his brethren, *i.e.* as captain of a company of freebooters, and was welcomed in Shechem, because the Shechemites, who were dissatisfied with the rule of Abimelech, hoped to find in him a man who would be able to render them good service in their revolt from Abimelech. This may be gathered from the words "*and the lords of Shechem trusted in him.*"—Ver. 27. At the vintage they prepared הִלּוּלִים, "praise-offerings," with the grapes which they had gathered and pressed, eating and drinking in the house of their god, *i.e.* the temple of Baal-berith, and cursing Abimelech at these sacrificial meals, probably when they were excited with wine. הִלּוּלִים signifies, according to Lev. xix. 24, praise-offerings of the fruits which newly-planted orchards or vineyards bore in the fourth year. The presentation of these fruits, by which the vineyard or orchard was sanctified to

the Lord, was associated, as we may learn from the passage before us, with sacrificial meals. The Shechemites held a similar festival in the temple of their covenant Baal, and in his honour, to that which the law prescribes for the Israelites in Lev. xix. 23–25.— Vers. 28, 29. At this feast Gaal called upon the Shechemites to revolt from Abimelech. "*Who is Abimelech*," he exclaimed, "*and who Shechem, that we serve him? Is he not the son of Jerubbaal, and Zebul his officer? Serve the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem! and why should we, we serve him* (Abimelech)?" The meaning of these words, which have been misinterpreted in several different ways, is very easily seen, if we bear in mind (1) that מִי (who is?) in this double question cannot possibly be used in two different and altogether opposite senses, such as "how insignificant or contemptible is Abimelech," and "how great and mighty is Shechem," but that in both instances it must be expressive of disparagement and contempt, as in 1 Sam. xxv. 10; and (2) that Gaal answers his own questions. Abimelech was regarded by him as contemptible, not because he was the son of a maid-servant or of very low birth, nor because he was ambitious and cruel, a parricide and the murderer of his brethren (*Rosenmüller*), but because he was a son of Jerubbaal, a son of the man who destroyed the altar of Baal at Shechem and restored the worship of Jehovah, for which the Shechemites themselves had endeavoured to slay him (chap. vi. 27 sqq.). So also the meaning of the question, Who is Shechem? may be gathered from the answer, "and Zebul his officer." The use of the personal מִי (who) in relation to Shechem may be explained on the ground that Gaal is speaking not so much of the city as of its inhabitants. The might and greatness of Shechem did not consist in the might and authority of its prefect, Zebul, who had been appointed by Abimelech, and whom the Shechemites had no need to serve. Accordingly there is no necessity either for the arbitrary paraphrase of Shechem, given in the *Sept.*, viz. *υἱὸς Συχέμ* (son of Shechem); or for the perfectly arbitrary assumption of *Bertheau*, that Shechem is only a second name for Abimelech, who was a descendant of Shechem; or even for the solution proposed by *Rosenmüller*, that Zebul was "a man of low birth and obscure origin," which is quite incapable of proof. To Zebul, that one man whom Abimelech had appointed prefect of the city, Gaal opposes "*the men of Hamor, the father of Shechem*," as those whom the Shechemites should serve (*i.e.* whose followers they should be). *Hamor* was the name of the Hivite prince who had founded the city of

Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 19, xxxiv. 2; compare Josh. xxiv. 32). The "men of Hamor" were the patricians of the city, who "derived their origin from the noblest and most ancient stock of Hamor" (*Rosenmüller*). Gaal opposes them to Abimelech and his representative Zebul.[1] In the last clause, "*why should we serve him*" (Abimelech or his officer Zebul)? Gaal identifies himself with the inhabitants of Shechem, that he may gain them fully over to his plans.—Ver. 29. "*O that this people*," continued Gaal, "*were in my hand*," *i.e.* could I but rule over the inhabitants of Shechem, "*then would I remove* (drive away) *Abimelech*." He then exclaimed with regard to Abimelech (לְ אָמַר, as in ver. 54*b*, Gen. xx. 13, etc.), "*Increase thine army and come out!*" Heated as he was with wine, Gaal was so certain of victory that he challenged Abimelech boldly to make war upon Shechem. רַבֶּה, imper. *Piel* with *Seghol.* צֵאָה, imperative, with ה־ of motion or emphasis.

Vers. 30–45. This rebellious speech of Gaal was reported to Abimelech by the town-prefect Zebul, who sent messengers to him בְּתָרְמָה, either with deceit (תָּרְמָה from רָמָה), *i.e.* employing deceit, inasmuch as he had listened to the speech quietly and with apparent assent, or "*in Tormah*," the name of a place, תָּרְמָה being a misspelling for ארמה = אֲרוּמָה (ver. 41). The *Sept.* and *Chaldee* take the word as an appellative = *ἐν κρυφῇ*, secretly; so also do *Rashi* and most of the earlier commentators, whilst *R. Kimchi* the elder has decided in favour of the second rendering as a proper name. As the word only occurs here, it is impossible to decide with certainty in favour of either view. הִנֵּם צָרִים, behold they stir up the city against thee (צָרִים from צוּר in the sense of צָרַר).—Ver. 32. At the same time he called upon Abimelech to draw near, with the people that he had with him, during the night, and to lie in wait in the field (אָרַב, to place one's self in ambush), and the next morning to spread out with his army against the town; and when Gaal went out with his followers, he was to do to him "as his hand should find," *i.e.* to deal with him as he best could and would under the circumstances. (On this formula, see at 1 Sam. x. 7, xxv. 8.)—

[1] *Bertheau* maintains, though quite erroneously, that serving the men of Hamor is synonymous with serving Abimelech. But the very opposite of this is so clearly implied in the words, that there cannot be any doubt on the question. All that can be gathered from the words is that there were remnants of the Hivite (or Canaanitish) population still living in Shechem, and therefore that the Canaanites had not been entirely exterminated,—a fact which would sufficiently explain the revival of the worship of Baal there.

Ver. 34. On receiving this intelligence, Abimelech rose up during the night with the people that were with him, *i.e.* with such troops as he had, and placed four companies ("heads" as in chap. vii. 16) in ambush against Shechem.—Vers. 35, 36. When Gaal went out in the morning with his retinue upon some enterprise, which is not more clearly defined, and stood before the city gate, Abimelech rose up with his army out of the ambush. On seeing this people, Gaal said to Zebul (who must therefore have come out of the city with him): "*Behold, people come down from the tops of the mountains.*" Zebul replied, for the purpose of deceiving him and making him feel quite secure, "*Thou lookest upon the shadow of the mountains as men.*"—Ver. 37. But Gaal said again, "*Behold, people come down from the navel of the land,*" *i.e.* from the highest point of the surrounding country, "*and a crowd comes by the way of the wizard's terebinths,*"—a place in the neighbourhood of Shechem that is not mentioned anywhere else, and therefore is not more precisely known.—Ver. 38. Then Zebul declared openly against Gaal, and reproached him with his foolhardy speech, whilst Abimelech was drawing nearer with his troops: "*Where is thy mouth now with which thou saidst, Who is Abimelech? Is not this the people that thou hast despised? Go out now and fight with him!*"—Vers. 39 sqq. Then Gaal went out "before the citizens of Shechem;" *i.e.* not at their head as their leader, which is the meaning of לִפְנֵי in Gen. xxxiii. 3, Ex. xiii. 21, Num. x. 35, etc.,—for, according to vers. 33–35, Gaal had only gone out of the town with his own retinue, and, according to vers. 42, 43, the people of Shechem did not go out till the next day,—but "in the sight of the lords of Shechem," so that they looked upon the battle. But the battle ended unfortunately for him. Abimelech put him to flight (וַיְדָפֵהוּ as in Lev. xxvi. 36), and there fell many slain up to the gate of the city, into which Gaal had fled with his followers.—Ver. 41. Abimelech did not force his way into the city, but remained (וַיֵּשֶׁב, *lit.* sat down) with his army in *Arumah*, a place not mentioned again, which was situated, according to ver. 42, somewhere in the neighbourhood of Shechem. It cannot possibly have been the place called Ῥουμὰ ἡ καὶ Ἄρυμα in the *Onom.* of *Eusebius*, which was named Ῥέμφις in his day, and was situated in the neighbourhood of Diospolis (or Lydda). Zebul, however, drove Gaal and his brethren (*i.e.* his retinue) out of Shechem.—Vers. 42–45. The next day the people of Shechem went into the field, apparently not to make war upon Abimelech, but to work in the field, possibly to continue the

vintage. But when Abimelech was informed of it, he divided the people, *i.e.* his own men, into three companies, which he placed in ambush in the field, and then fell upon the Shechemites when they had come out of the city, and slew them.—Ver. 44. That is to say, Abimelech and the companies with him spread themselves out and took their station by the city gate to cut off the retreat of the Shechemites into the city, whilst the other two companies fell upon all who were in the field, and slew them.—Ver. 45. Thus Abimelech fought all that day against the city and took it; and having slain all the people therein, he destroyed the city and strewed salt upon it. Strewing the ruined city with salt, which only occurs here, was a symbolical act, signifying that the city was to be turned for ever into a barren salt desert. Salt ground is a barren desert (see Job xxxix. 6, Ps. cvii. 34).

Vers. 46–49. When the inhabitants of the castle of Shechem ("lords of the tower of Shechem" = "all the house of Millo," ver. 6) heard of the fate of the town of Shechem, they betook themselves to the hold of the house (temple) of the covenant god (Baal-berith), evidently not for the purpose of defending themselves there, but to seek safety at the sanctuary of their god from fear of the vengeance of Abimelech, towards whom they also had probably acted treacherously. The meaning of the word צְרִיחַ, which answers to an Arabic word signifying *arx, palatium, omnis structura elatior*, cannot be exactly determined, as it only occurs again in 1 Sam. xiii. 6 in connection with caves and clefts of the rock. According to ver. 49, it had a roof which could be set on fire. The meaning "tower" is only a conjecture founded upon the context, and does not suit, as צְרִיחַ is distinguished from מִגְדָּל.—Ver. 47. As soon as this was announced to Abimelech, he went with all his men to Mount Zalmon, took hatchets in his hand, cut down branches from the trees, and laid them upon his shoulders, and commanded his people to do the same. These branches they laid upon the hold, and set the hold on fire over them (the inhabitants of the tower who had taken refuge there), so that all the people of the tower of Shechem (about one thousand persons) perished, both men and women. Mount *Zalmon*, which is mentioned again in Ps. lxviii. 15, was a dark, thickly-wooded mountain near Shechem,—a kind of "Black Forest," as *Luther* has rendered the name. The plural *kardumoth*, "axes," may be explained on the ground that Abimelech took axes not only for himself but for his people also. מָה in a relative sense, as in Num. xxiii. 3 (see *Ewald*, § 331, *b.*).

Vers. 50–57. At length the fate predicted by Jotham (ver. 20) overtook Abimelech.—Vers. 50, 51. He went from Shechem to Thebez, besieged the town, and took it. *Thebez*, according to the *Onom.* thirteen miles from Neapolis (Shechem) on the road to Scythopolis (Beisan), has been preserved in the large village of *Tubâs* on the north of Shechem (see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 156, and Bibl. Res. p. 305). This town possessed a strong tower, in which men and women and all the inhabitants of the town took refuge and shut themselves in. But when Abimelech advanced to the tower and drew near to the door to set it on fire, a woman threw a millstone down upon him from the roof of the tower and smashed his skull, whereupon he called hastily to the attendant who carried his weapons to give him his death-blow with his sword, that men might not say of him "a woman slew him." פֶּלַח רֶכֶב, the upper millstone which was turned round, *lapis vector* (see Deut. xxiv. 6). תִּרְצִין: from רָצִין, with a toneless *i*, possibly to distinguish it from וַתָּרֶץ (from רוּץ). גֻּלְגַּלְתּוֹ, an unusual form for גֻּלְגָּלְתּוֹ, which is found in the edition of *Norzi* (Mantua, 1742).—Ver. 55. After the death of Abimelech his army was dissolved. אִישׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל are the Israelites who formed Abimelech's army. In vers. 56, 57, the historian closes this account with the remark, that in this manner God recompensed Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem, who had supported him in the murder of his brothers (ver. 2), according to their doings. After the word "*rendered*" in ver. 56 we must supply "upon his head," as in ver. 57. Thus Jotham's curse was fulfilled upon Abimelech and upon the Shechemites, who had made him king.

*The Judges Tola and Jair.*—Chap. x. 1–5.

Of these two judges no particular deeds are mentioned, no doubt because they performed none.—Vers. 1, 2. *Tola* arose after Abimelech's death to deliver Israel, and judged Israel twenty-three years until his death, though certainly not all the Israelites of the twelve tribes, but only the northern and possibly also the eastern tribes, to the exclusion of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, as these southern tribes neither took part in Gideon's war of freedom nor stood under Abimelech's rule.. To explain the clause "*there arose to defend* (or save) *Israel*," when nothing had been said about any fresh oppression on the part of the foe, we need not assume, as *Rosenmüller* does, "that the Israelites had been constantly harassed by their neighbours, who continued to suppress the liberty of the

Israelites, and from whose stratagems or power the Israelites were delivered by the acts of Tola;" but Tola rose up as the deliverer of Israel, even supposing that he simply regulated the affairs of the tribes who acknowledged him as their supreme judge, and succeeded by his efforts in preventing the nation from falling back into idolatry, and thus guarded Israel from any fresh oppression on the part of hostile nations. *Tola* was the son of *Puah*, the son of *Dodo*, of the tribe of Issachar. The names *Tola* and *Puah* are already met with among the descendants of Issachar, as founders of families of the tribe of Issachar (see Gen. xlvi. 13, Num. xxvi. 23, where the latter name is written פֻּוָה), and they were afterwards repeated in the different households of these families. *Dodo* is not an appellative, as the *Sept.* translators supposed (*υἱὸς πατραδέλφου αὐτοῦ*), but a proper name, as in 2 Sam. xxiii. 9 (*Keri*), 24, and 1 Chron. xi. 12. The town of *Shamir*, upon the mountains of Ephraim, where Tola judged Israel, and was afterwards buried, was a different place from the *Shamir* upon the mountains of Judah, mentioned in Josh xv. 48, and its situation (probably in the territory of Issachar) is still unknown.—Vers. 3 sqq. After him *Jair* the Gileadite (born in Gilead) judged Israel for twenty-two years. Nothing further is related of him than that he had thirty sons who rode upon thirty asses, which was a sign of distinguished rank in those times when the Israelites had no horses. They had thirty cities (the second עָיָרִים in ver. 4 is another form for עָרִים, from a singular עִיר = עִיר, a city, and is chosen because of its similarity in sound to עַיָרִים, asses). These cities they were accustomed to call *Havvoth-jair* unto this day (the time when our book was written), in the land of Gilead. The לָהֶם before יִקְרְאוּ is placed first for the sake of emphasis, "*even these they call*," etc. This statement is not at variance with the fact, that in the time of Moses the Manassite Jair gave the name of *Havvoth-jair* to the towns of Bashan which had been conquered by him (Num. xxxii. 41; Deut. iii. 14); for it is not affirmed here, that the thirty cities which belonged to the sons of Jair received this name for the first time from the judge Jair, but simply that this name was brought into use again by the sons of Jair, and was applied to these cities in a peculiar sense. (For further remarks on the *Havvoth-jair*, see at Deut. iii. 14.) The situation of *Camon*, where Jair was buried, is altogether uncertain. *Josephus* (Ant. v. 6, 6) calls it a city of Gilead, though probably only on account of the assumption, that it would not be likely that Jair the Gileadite, who possessed so many cities in Gilead, should

be buried outside Gilead. But this assumption is a very questionable one. As Jair judged Israel after Tola the Issacharite, the assumption is a more natural one, that he lived in Canaan proper. Yet *Reland* (Pal. ill. p. 679) supports the opinion that it was in Gilead, and adduces the fact that *Polybius* (Hist. v. 70, 12) mentions a town called *Καμοῦν*, by the side of Pella and Gefrun, as having been taken by Antiochus. On the other hand, *Eusebius* and *Jerome* (in the *Onom.*) regard our *Camon* as being the same as the *κώμη Καμμωνὰ ἐν τῷ μεγάλῳ πεδίῳ*, six Roman miles to the north of *Legio* (*Lejun*), on the way to Ptolemais, which would be in the plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon. This is no doubt applicable to the *Κναμών* of Judith vii. 3; but whether it also applies to our *Camon* cannot be decided, as the town is not mentioned again.

### III. PERIOD OF OPPRESSION BY THE AMMONITES AND PHILISTINES. —CHAP. X. 6–XVI.

The third stage in the period of the judges, which extended from the death of Jair to the rise of Samuel as a prophet, was a time of deep humiliation for Israel, since the Lord gave up His people into the hands of two hostile nations at the same time, on account of their repeated return to idolatry; so that the Ammonites invaded the land from the east, and oppressed the Israelites severely for eighteen years, especially the tribes to the east of the Jordan; whilst the Philistines came from the west, and extended their dominion over the tribes on this side, and brought them more and more firmly under their yoke. It is true that Jephthah delivered his people from the oppression of the Ammonites, in the power of the Spirit of Jehovah, having first of all secured the help of God through a vow, and not only smote the Ammonites, but completely subdued them before the Israelites. But the Philistine oppression lasted forty years; for although Samson inflicted heavy blows upon the Philistines again and again, and made them feel the superior power of the God of Israel, he was nevertheless not in a condition to destroy their power and rule over Israel. This was left for Samuel to accomplish, after he had converted the people to the Lord their God.

#### *Israel's renewed Apostasy and consequent Punishment.*— Chap. x. 6–18.

As the Israelites forsook the Lord their God again, and served the gods of the surrounding nations, the Lord gave them up to the

power of the Philistines and Ammonites, and left them to groan for eighteen years under the severe oppression of the Ammonites, till they cried to Him in their distress, and He sent them deliverance through Jephthah, though not till He had first of all charged them with their sins, and they had put away the strange gods. This section forms the introduction, not only to the history of Jephthah (chap. xi. 1–xii. 7) and the judges who followed him, viz. Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon (chap. xii. 8–15), but also to the history of Samson, who began to deliver Israel out of the power of the Philistines (chap. xiii.–xvi.). After the fact has been mentioned in the introduction (in ver. 7), that Israel was given up into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites at the same time, the Ammonitish oppression, which lasted eighteen years, is more particularly described in vers. 8, 9. This is followed by the reproof of the idolatrous Israelites on the part of God (vers. 10–16); and lastly, the history of Jephthah is introduced in vers. 17, 18, the fuller account being given in chap. xi. Jephthah, who judged Israel for six years after the conquest and humiliation of the Ammonites (chap. xii. 7), was followed by the judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon, who judged Israel for seven, ten, and eight years respectively, that is to say, for twenty-five years in all; so that Abdon died forty-nine years (18+6+25) after the commencement of the Ammonitish oppression, *i.e.* nine years after the termination of the forty years' rule of the Philistines over Israel, which is described more particularly in chap. xiii. 1, for the purpose of introducing the history of Samson, who judged Israel twenty years under that rule (chap. xv. 20, xvi. 31), without bringing it to a close, or even surviving it. It was only terminated by the victory which Israel achieved under Samuel at Ebenezer, as described in 1 Sam. vii.

Vers. 6–16. In the account of the renewed apostasy of the Israelites from the Lord contained in ver. 6, seven heathen deities are mentioned as being served by the Israelites: viz., in addition to the *Canaanitish Baals* and *Astartes* (see at chap. ii. 11, 13), the gods of *Aram*, *i.e. Syria*, who are never mentioned by name; of *Sidon*, *i.e.*, according to 1 Kings xi. 5, principally the Sidonian or Phœnician Astarte; of the *Moabites*, *i.e.* Chemosh (1 Kings xi. 33), the principal deity of that people, which was related to Moloch (see at Num. xxi. 29); of the *Ammonites*, *i.e.* Milcom (1 Kings xi. 5, 33) or Moloch (see at Lev. xviii. 21); and of the *Philistines*, *i.e.* Dagon (see at chap. xvi. 23). If we compare the list of these seven deities with vers. 11 and 12, where we find seven nations mentioned out

of whose hands Jehovah had delivered Israel, the correspondence between the number seven in these two cases and the significant use of the number are unmistakeable. Israel had balanced the number of divine deliverances by a similar number of idols which it served, so that the measure of the nation's iniquity was filled up in the same proportion as the measure of the delivering grace of God. The number *seven* is employed in the Scriptures as the stamp of the works of God, or of the perfection created, or to be created, by God on the one hand, and of the actions of men in their relation to God on the other. The foundation for this was the creation of the world in seven days.—On ver. 7, see chap. ii. 13, 14. The Ammonites are mentioned after the Philistines, not because they did not oppress the Israelites till afterwards, but for purely formal reasons, viz. because the historian was about to describe the oppression of the Ammonites first. In ver. 8 the subject is the "children of Ammon," as we may see very clearly from ver. 9. "*They* (the Ammonites) *ground and crushed the Israelites in the same year*," *i.e.* the year in which God sold the Israelites into their hands, or in which they invaded the land of Israel. רָעַץ and רָצַץ are synonymous, and are simply joined together for the sake of emphasis, whilst the latter calls to mind Deut. xxviii. 33. The duration of this oppression is then added: "*Eighteen years* (they crushed) *all the Israelites, who dwelt on the other side of the Jordan in the land of the Amorites*," *i.e.* of the two Amoritish kings Sihon and Og, who (dwelt) in Gilead. *Gilead*, being a more precise epithet for the land of the Amorites, is used here in a wider sense to denote the whole of the country on the east of the Jordan, so far as it had been taken from the Amorites and occupied by the Israelites (as in Num. xxxii. 29, Deut. xxxiv. 1: see at Josh. xxii. 9).—Ver. 9. They also crossed the Jordan, and made war even upon Judah, Benjamin, and the house of Ephraim (the families of the tribe of Ephraim), by which Israel was brought into great distress. וַתֵּצַר, as in chap. ii. 15.—Vers. 10–14. When the Israelites cried in their distress to the Lord, "*We have sinned against Thee, namely, that we have forsaken our God and served the Baals*," the Lord first of all reminded them of the manifestations of His grace (vers. 11, 12), and then pointed out to them their faithless apostasy and the worthlessness of their idols (vers. 13, 14). וְגַם, "*and indeed that*," describes the sin more minutely, and there is no necessity to remove it from the text,—an act which is neither warranted by its absence from several MSS. nor by its omission from the Sept., the Syriac, and the Vulgate. *Baalim*

is a general term used to denote all the false gods, as in chap. ii. 11. This answer on the part of God to the prayer of the Israelites for help is not to be regarded as having been given through an extraordinary manifestation (theophany), or through the medium of a prophet, for that would certainly have been recorded; but it was evidently given in front of the tabernacle, where the people had called upon the Lord, and either came through the high priest, or else through an inward voice in which God spoke to the hearts of the people, *i.e.* through the voice of their own consciences, by which God recalled to their memories and impressed upon their hearts first of all His own gracious acts, and then their faithless apostasy. There is an *anakolouthon* in the words of God. The construction which is commenced with מִמִּצְרַיִם is dropped at וְצִידוֹנִים וגו׳ in ver. 12; and the verb הוֹשַׁעְתִּי, which answers to the beginning of the clause, is brought up afterwards in the form of an apodosis with וְאוֹשִׁיעָה אֶתְכֶם. "*Did I not deliver you* (1) *from the Egyptians* (cf. Ex. i.–xiv.); (2) *from the Amorites* (cf. Num. xxi. 3); (3) *from the Ammonites* (who oppressed Israel along with the Moabites in the time of Ehud, chap. iii. 12 sqq.); (4) *from the Philistines* (through Shamgar: see 1 Sam. xii. 9, where the Philistines are mentioned between Sisera and Moab); (5) *from the Sidonians* (among whom probably the northern Canaanites under Jabin are included, as Sidon, according to chap. xviii. 7, 28, appears to have exercised a kind of principality or protectorate over the northern tribes of Canaan); (6) *from the Amalekites* (who attacked the Israelites even at Horeb, Ex. xvii. 8 sqq., and afterwards invaded the land of Israel both with the Moabites, chap. iii. 13, and also with the Midianites, chap. vi. 3); *and* (7) *from the Midianites?*" (see chap. vi. vii.). The last is the reading of the LXX. in *Cod. Al.* and *Vat.*, viz. *Μαδιαμ*; whereas *Ald.* and *Compl.* read *Χαναάν*, also the *Vulgate*. In the Masoretic text, on the other hand, we have *Maon*. Were this the original and true reading, we might perhaps think of the *Mehunim*, who are mentioned in 2 Chron. xxvi. 7 along with Philistines and Arabians (cf. 1 Chron. iv. 41), and are supposed to have been inhabitants of the city of *Maan* on the Syrian pilgrim road to the east of Petra (*Burckhardt*, Syr. pp. 734 and 1035: see *Ewald*, Gesch. i. pp. 321, 322). But there is very little probability in this supposition, as we cannot possibly see how so small a people could have oppressed Israel so grievously at that time, that the deliverance from their oppression could be mentioned here; whilst it would be very strange that nothing should be said

about the terrible oppression of the Midianites and the wonderful deliverance from that oppression effected by Gideon. Consequently the Septuagint (*Μαδιάμ*) appears to have preserved the original text.—Ver. 13. Instead of thanking the Lord, however, for these deliverances by manifesting true devotedness to Him, Israel had forsaken Him and served other gods (see chap. ii. 13).—Vers. 14 sqq. Therefore the Lord would not save them any more. They might get help from the gods whom they had chosen for themselves. The Israelites should now experience what Moses had foretold in his song (Deut. xxxii. 37, 38). This divine threat had its proper effect. The Israelites confessed their sins, submitted thoroughly to the chastisement of God, and simply prayed for salvation; nor did they content themselves with merely promising, they put away the strange gods and served Jehovah, *i.e.* they devoted themselves again with sincerity to His service, and so were seriously converted to the living God. "*Then was His* (Jehovah's) *soul impatient* (תִּקְצַר, as in Num. xxi. 4) *because of the troubles of Israel;*" *i.e.* Jehovah could no longer look down upon the misery of Israel; He was obliged to help. The change in the purpose of God does not imply any changeableness in the divine nature; it simply concerns the attitude of God towards His people, or the manifestation of the divine love to man. In order to bend the sinner at all, the love of God must withdraw its helping hand and make men feel the consequences of their sin and rebelliousness, that they may forsake their evil ways and turn to the Lord their God. When this end has been attained, the same divine love manifests itself as pitying and helping grace. Punishments and benefits flow from the love of God, and have for their object the happiness and well-being of men.

Vers. 17, 18. These verses form the introduction to the account of the help and deliverance sent by God, and describe the preparation made by Israel to fight against its oppressors. The Ammonites "*let themselves be called together*," *i.e.* assembled together (וַיִּצָּעֲקוּ, as in chap. vii. 23), and encamped in Gilead, *i.e.* in that portion of Gilead of which they had taken possession. For the Israelites, *i.e.* the tribes to the east of the Jordan (according to ver. 18 and chap. xi. 29), also assembled together in Gilead and encamped at *Mizpeh*, *i.e.* Ramath-mizpeh or Ramoth in Gilead (Josh. xiii. 26, xx. 8), probably on the site of the present *Szalt* (see at Deut. iv. 43, and the remarks in the Commentary on the Pent. vol. i. p. 300), and resolved to look round for a man who could begin the war, and to make him the head over all the inhabitants of Gilead (the tribes of

Israel dwelling in Perea). The "*princes of Gilead*" are in apposition to "*the people*." "The people, namely, the princes of Gilead," *i.e.* the heads of tribes and families of the Israelites to the east of the Jordan. "*Head*" is still further defined in chap. xi. 6, 11, as "*captain*," or "*head and captain*."

*Jephthah elected as Prince; Negotiations with the Ammonites; Victory, Vow, and Office of Judge.*[1]—Chap. xi.–xii. 7.

Vers. 1–11. ELECTION OF JEPHTHAH AS PRINCE AND JUDGE OF ISRAEL.—Vers. 1–3. The account begins with his descent and early mode of life. "*Jephthah* (LXX. Ἰεφθά) the Gileadite was a brave hero" (see chap. vi. 12, Josh. i. 14, etc.); but he was the son of a harlot, and was begotten by Gilead, in addition to other sons who were born of his wife. *Gilead* is not the name of the country, as *Bertheau* supposes, so that the land is mythically personified as the forefather of Jephthah. Nor is it the name of the son of Machir and grandson of Manasseh (Num. xxvi. 29), so that the celebrated ancestor of the Gileadites is mentioned here instead of the unknown father of Jephthah. It is really the proper name of the father himself; and just as in the case of Tola and Puah, in chap. x. 1, the name of the renowned ancestor was repeated in his descendant. We are forced to this conclusion by the fact that the wife of Gilead, and his other sons by that wife, are mentioned in ver. 2. These sons drove their half-brother Jephthah out

[1] On the nature of the sources from which the author drew this tolerably elaborate history of Jephthah, all that can be determined with certainty is, that they sprang from some contemporary of this judge, since they furnish so clear and striking a picture of his life and doings. *Bertheau's* hypothesis, that the section extending from chap. xi. 12 to ver. 28 is founded upon some historical work, which is also employed in Num. xxi., Deut. ii. iii., and here and there in the book of Joshua, has really no other foundation than the unproved assumption that the Pentateuch and the book of Joshua were written towards the close of the period of the kings. For the marked agreement between Jephthah's negotiations with the king of the Ammonites concerning the possession of the land to the east of the Jordan, and the account given in the Pentateuch, especially in Num. xx. xxi., may be explained very simply and very perfectly, on the supposition that the author possessed the Pentateuch itself. And the account which is wanting in the Pentateuch, namely, that Israel petitioned the king of Moab also for permission to go through his land (ver. 17), may have been added from oral tradition, as those glorious victories gained by Israel under Moses were celebrated in verse by contemporaneous poets (see Num. xxi. 14, 17, 27); and this certainly contributed not a little to keep alive the memory of those events in the nation for centuries long.

of the house because of his inferior birth, that he might not share with them in the paternal inheritance; just as Ishmael and the sons of Keturah were sent away by Abraham, that they might not inherit along with Isaac (Gen. xxi. 10 sqq., xxv. 6).—Ver. 3. Jephthah departed from his brothers into the land of *Tob*, *i.e.*, according to 2 Sam. x. 6, 8, a district in the north-east of Perea, on the border of Syria, or between Syria and Ammonitis, called *Τώβιον* in 1 Macc. v. 13, or more correctly *Τουβίν*, according to 2 Macc. xii. 17, where loose men gathered round him (cf. chap. ix. 4), and "went out with him," viz. upon warlike and predatory expeditions like the Bedouins. —Vers. 4–6. But when the Ammonites made war upon Israel some time afterwards, the elders of Gilead (= "the princes of Gilead," chap. x. 18) went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob, to make this brave warrior their leader. In ver. 4 the account of the war between the Ammonites and Israel, which is mentioned in chap. x. 17, is resumed, and its progress under Jephthah is then more fully described. "*In process of time*" (מִיָּמִים, *a diebus*, *i.e.* after the lapse of a long period, which cannot be more precisely defined), *sc.* after the expulsion of Jephthah from his home (see chap. xiv. 8, xv. 1, Josh. xxiii. 1). קָצִין signifies a leader in war (Josh. x. 24), and is therefore distinguished in ver. 11 from רֹאשׁ, a chief in peace and war.—Ver. 7. Jephthah expressed to the elders his astonishment that they had formerly hated and expelled him, and now came to him in their distress, *sc.* to make him their leader in time of war. Thus he lays his expulsion upon the shoulders of the elders of Gilead, although it was only by his brethren that he had been driven away from his father's house, inasmuch as they had either approved of it, or at all events had not interfered as magistrates to prevent it. We cannot indeed infer from this reproach, that the expulsion and disinheriting of Jephthah was a legal wrong; but so much at all events is implied, namely, that Jephthah looked upon the thing as a wrong that had been done to him, and found the reason in the hatred of his brethren. The Mosaic law contained no regulation upon this matter, since the rule laid down in Deut. xxi. 15–17 simply applied to the sons of different wives, and not to a son by a harlot.—Ver. 8. The elders replied, "*Therefore* (לָכֵן, because we have formerly done thee wrong) *we have now come to thee again to make thee our head, if thou comest with us and fightest against the Ammonites.*" The clauses וְהָלַכְתָּ, וְנִלְחַמְתָּ, and וְהָיִיתָ, which are formally co-ordinate, are logically to be subordinated to one another, the first two expressing the condition, the third the

consequence, in this sense, "*If thou go with us and fight, . . . thou shalt be head to us, namely, to all the inhabitants of Gilead,*" *i.e.* to the two tribes and a half on the east of the Jordan.—Ver. 9. Jephthah assented to this: "*If ye will take me back to make war upon the Ammonites, and Jehovah shall give them up to me* (*lit.* 'before me,' as in Josh. x. 12, Deut. ii. 31, etc.), *I will be your head.*" "*I*" is emphatic as distinguished from *ye;* and there is no necessity to regard the sentence as a question, with which the expression in ver. 10, "according to thy words," which presuppose an affirmative statement on the part of Jephthah, and not a question, would be altogether irreconcilable.—Ver. 10. The elders promised this on oath. "*Jehovah be hearing between us,*" *i.e.* be hearer and judge of the things concerning which we are negotiating; "*truly according to thy word so will we do*" (אִם, a particle used in connection with an oath).—Ver. 11. Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, "*and the people* (*i.e.* the inhabitants of Gilead) *made him head and captain, and Jephthah spoke all his words before Jehovah at Mizpeh:*" *i.e.* he repeated in a solemn assembly of the people, before God at Mizpeh, the conditions and obligations under which he would accept the honour conferred upon him. "*Before Jehovah*" does not necessarily presuppose the presence of the ark at Mizpeh; nor can we possibly assume this, since the war was resolved upon primarily by the eastern tribes alone, and they had no ark at all. It merely affirms that Jephthah performed this act, looking up to God, the omnipresent head of Israel. Still less do the words warrant the assumption that there was an altar in Mizpeh, and that sacrifices were offered to confirm the treaty, of which there is not the slightest indication in the text. "'Before Jehovah' implies nothing more than that Jephthah confirmed all his words by an oath" (*Hengstenberg*, Diss. ii. pp. 35, 36).

Vers. 12–28. JEPHTHAH'S NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE KING OF THE AMMONITES.—Ver. 12. Before Jephthah took the sword, he sent messengers to the king of the Ammonites, to make complaints to him of his invasion of the land of the Israelites. "*What have we to do with one another* ('what to me and thee?' see Josh. xxii. 24, 2 Sam. xvi. 10), *that thou hast come to me to fight against my land?*" Jephthah's ambassadors speak in the name of the nation; hence the singulars "*me*" and "*my land.*"—Ver. 13. The king of the Ammonites replied, that when Israel came up out of Egypt, they had taken away his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok (on

the north), and to the Jordan (on the west), and demanded that they should now restore these lands in peace. The plural אֹתָם (them) refers *ad sensum* to the cities and places in the land in question. The claim raised by the king of the Ammonites has one feature in it, which appears to have a certain colour of justice. The Israelites, it is true, had only made war upon the two kings of the Amorites, Sihon and Og, and defeated them, and taken possession of their kingdoms and occupied them, without attacking the Ammonites and Moabites and Edomites, because God had forbidden their attacking these nations (Deut. ii. 5, 9, 19); but one portion of the territory of Sihon had formerly been Moabitish and Ammonitish property, and had been conquered by the Amorites and occupied by them. According to Num. xxi. 26, Sihon had made war upon the previous king of Moab, and taken away all his land as far as the Arnon (see the comm. on this passage). And although it is not expressly stated in the Pentateuch that Sihon had extended his conquests beyond Moabitis into the land of the Ammonites, which was situated to the east of Moab, and had taken a portion of it from them, this is pretty clearly indicated in Josh. xiii. 25, since, according to that passage, the tribe of Gad received in addition to Jaezer and all the towns of Gilead, half the land of the children of Ammon, namely, the land to the east of Gilead, on the western side of the upper Jabbok (Nahr Ammân: see at Josh. xiii. 26).[1]—Vers. 14, 15. Jephthah then sent ambassadors again to explain to him the true state of the case, namely, that Israel had neither taken away the land of Moab nor the land of the Ammonites. As a proof of this, Jephthah adduced the leading facts connected with the journey of the Israelites through the desert of Arabia to Canaan, by

[1] The explanation which *Masius* gives of this passage (*Eatenus modo sursum in Galaaditidem exporrectam jacuisse Gaditarum hæreditatem, quatenus dimidia Ammonitarum ditio Galaaditidem ab oriente ambiebat*) is not sufficiently in keeping with the words, and too unnatural, to be regarded as correct, as it is by *Reland* (Pal. ill. p. 105) and *Hengstenberg* (Dissertations on the Pentateuch, ii. p. 29); and the reasons assigned by Masius, viz. "that the Israelites were prohibited from occupying the land of the Ammonites," and "the Ammonites are not mentioned in Num. xxi. 26," are too weak to establish anything. The latter is an *argumentum e silentio*, which loses all significance when we bear in mind, that even the allusion to the land of the Moabites in Num. xxi. 26 is only occasioned by the prominence given to Heshbon, and the poetical saying founded upon its fall. But the prohibition against taking the land of the Ammonites from them had just as much force in relation to the land of the Moabites, and simply referred to such land as these tribes still possessed in the time of Moses, and not to that which the Amorites had taken from them.

which this assertion was confirmed, in exact agreement with the accounts of the Pentateuch respecting the matter in dispute.—Vers. 16, 17. On leaving Egypt, Israel passed through the desert to the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh (Num. xx. 1). They then sent messengers to the king of Edom, to obtain permission to pass through his land; and this the king of Edom refused (Num. xx. 14–21). They also sent to the king of Moab, who sent back a similar refusal. The embassy to the king of Moab is not mentioned in the Pentateuch, as it had no direct bearing upon the further course of the Israelites (see Pentateuch, vol. iii. p. 132, note 2). "*And Israel abode in Kadesh*" (word for word, as in Num. xx. 1*b*), and "*then passed through the desert,*" namely to Mount Hor, then down the Arabah to the Red Sea, and still farther past Oboth to Ijje-abarim in the desert (Num. xx. 22–xxi. 11). In this way they went round the land of Edom and the land of Moab (יָסֹב, like סָבַב in Num. xxi. 4); and came from the east to the land of Moab (*i.e.* along the eastern boundary, for Ijje-abarim was situated there, according to Num. xxi. 11); and encamped on the other side of the Arnon (Num. xxi. 13), *i.e.* on the upper course of the Arnon where it still flows through the desert (see Pent. iii. p. 144). On this march, therefore, they did not enter the territory of Moab, as the Arnon formed the boundary of Moab, *i.e.* the boundary between Moab and the territory of the Amorites (Num. xxi. 13).—Vers. 19–22 are almost *verbatim* the same as Num. xxi. 21–25. Israel then sent messengers to Sihon the king of the Amorites at Heshbon, to ask permission to pass through his land. "*Into my place,*" *i.e.* into the land of Canaan, that Jehovah has appointed for me. But Sihon "*trusted not Israel to pass through his land,*" *i.e.* he did not trust to the assurance of Israel that they only wanted to pass peaceably through his land, but supposed the petition to cover an intention to take forcible possession of it. (In Num. xxi. 23 we have לֹא נָתַן instead of לֹא הֶאֱמִין.) He did not confine himself, therefore, to a refusal of the permission they asked for, but collected his men of war, and marched against the Israelites to the desert as far as Jahza, on the east of Medeba and Dibon (see at Num. xxi. 23), and fought with them. But he was defeated, and lost all his land, from the Arnon (Mojeb) on the south to the Jabbok (Zerka) on the north, and from the desert on the east to the Jordan on the west, of which the Israelites took possession.—Vers. 23, 24. From these facts Jephthah drew this simple but indisputable conclusion: "*Jehovah the God of Israel has rooted out the Amorites before His*

*people Israel, and thou wilt take possession of it* (viz. the land of the Amorites)." The suffix to תִּירָשֶׁנּוּ refers to הָאֱמֹרִי, the Amorites, *i.e.* their land. The construction of יָרַשׁ with the accusative of the people (as in Deut. ii. 12, 21, 22, ix. 1) may be explained on the simple ground, that in order to take possession of a country, it is necessary first of all to get the holders of it into your power. Jephthah then proved still further how unwarrantable the claim of the king of the Ammonites was, and said to him (ver. 24), "*Is it not the fact* (הֲלֹא, *nonne*), *that what thy god Chemosh gives thee for a possession, of that thou takest possession; and all that Jehovah makes ownerless before us, of that we take possession?*"—an appeal the validity of which could not be disputed. For *Chemosh*, see at Num. xxi. 29. The verb הוֹרִישׁ combines the three meanings: to drive out of a possession, to deprive of a possessor, and to give for a possession; inasmuch as it is impossible to give a land for a possession without driving away or exterminating its former possessor. —Ver. 25. But not contenting himself with this conclusive deduction, Jephthah endeavoured to remove the lost appearance of right from the king's claim by a second and equally conclusive argument. "*And now art thou better than Balak son of Zippor, the king of Moab? Did he strive* (רוֹב, *inf. abs.* of רִיב or רוּב) *with Israel, or did he fight against them?*" By the repetition of וְעַתָּה (ver. 25, cf. ver. 23), the new argument is attached to the previous one, as a second deduction from the facts already described. Balak, the king of the Moabites, had indeed bribed Balaam to destroy Israel by his curses; but he did so not so much with the intention of depriving them of the territory of the Amorites which they had conquered, as from the fear that the powerful Israelites might also conquer his still remaining kingdom. Balak had neither made war upon Israel on account of the territory which they had conquered from the Amorites, nor had he put forward any claim to it as his own property, which he certainly might have done with some appearance of justice, as a large portion of it had formerly belonged to the Moabites (see Num. xxi. 26 and the comm. on this passage). If therefore Balak the king of the Moabites never thought of looking upon this land as being still his property, or of asking it back from the Israelites, the king of the Ammonites had no right whatever to lay claim to the land of Gilead as belonging to him, or to take it away from the Israelites by force, especially after the lapse of 300 years. "*As Israel dwells in Heshbon, . . . and in all the cities by the side of the Arnon for three hundred years, why have ye*

*not taken away* (these towns and lands) *within that time*" (*i.e.* during these 300 years)? If the Ammonites had had any right to it, they ought to have asserted their claim in Moses' time. It was much too late now, after the expiration of 300 years. For "if no prescriptive right is to be admitted on account of length of time, and if long possession gives no title, nothing would ever be held in safety by any people, and there would be no end to wars and dissension" (*Clericus*). On Heshbon and its daughters, see at Num. xxi. 25. *Aroër* (עֲרֹעֵר, another form for עֲרֹעֵר, or possibly only a copyist's error) is Aroër of Gad, before *Rabbah* (Josh. xiii. 25), and is to be sought for in the Wady Nahr Ammân, on the north-east of Ammân (see at Josh. *l. c.*), not Aroër of Reuben, on the border of the valley of Arnon (Num. xxxii. 34; Deut. ii. 36, iv. 48; Josh. xii. 2, xiii. 9). This is evident from the fact, that it is distinguished from "all the cities on the side (עַל יְדֵי, see at Num. xxxiv. 3) of the Arnon," which included Aroër of Reuben. *Aroër* of Gad, with its daughter towns, was probably Ammonitish territory before the time of Sihon. On the 300 years, a round number that comes very near the reality, see the *Chronol.* p. 285.—Ver. 27. After Jephthah had adduced all that could be said, to prove that the Israelites were the rightful possessors of the land of Gilead,[1] he closed with these words: "*I* (*i.e.* Israel, whose cause Jephthah was pleading) *have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong in that thou makest war against me. Let Jehovah the Judge be judge this day* (now) *between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.*" God should decide between the two nations, by giving the victory in war to the side whose cause was the just one.—Ver. 28. But the king of the Ammonites did not hearken to the words of Jephthah "which he had sent to him," *i.e.* had instructed his messengers to address to him; so that it was necessary that Jehovah should decide for Israel in battle.

Vers. 29–33. JEPHTHAH'S VICTORY OVER THE AMMONITES. —As the negotiations with the king of the Ammonites were fruitless, Jephthah had no other course left than to appeal to the sword. —Ver. 29. In the power of the Spirit of Jehovah which came upon him (see chap. iii. 10), he passed through Gilead (the land of the tribes of Reuben and Gad between the Arnon and the Jabbok)

[1] "Jephthah urged everything that could be pleaded in support of their prescriptive right: possession, length of time, the right of conquest, and undisputed occupation."—*Rosenmüller.*

and Manasseh (northern Gilead and Bashan, which the half tribe of Manasseh had received for a possession), to gather together an army to battle, and then went with the assembled army to Mizpeh-Gilead, *i.e.* Ramoth-mizpeh, where the Israelites had already encamped before his call (chap. x. 17), that he might thence attack the Ammonites. עָבַר (to pass over) with an accusative signifies to come over a person in a hostile sense.—Vers. 30, 31. Before commencing the war, however, he vowed a vow to the Lord: "*If Thou givest the Ammonites into my hand, he who cometh to meet me out of the doors of my house, when I return safely* (in peace, *shalom*) *from the Ammonites, shall belong to the Lord, and I will offer him for a burnt-offering.*" By the words הַיּוֹצֵא אֲשֶׁר, "he that goeth out," even if Jephthah did not think "only of a man, or even more definitely still of some one of his household," he certainly could not think in any case of a head of cattle, or one of his flock. "Going out of the doors of his house to meet him" is an expression that does not apply to a herd or flock driven out of the stall just at the moment of his return, or to any animal that might possibly run out to meet him. For the phrase יָצָא לִקְרָאת is only applied to men in the other passages in which it occurs.[1] Moreover, Jephthah no doubt intended to impose a very difficult vow upon himself. And that would not have been the case if he had merely been thinking of a sacrificial animal. Even without any vow, he would have offered, not one, but many sacrifices after obtaining a victory.[2] If therefore he had had an animal sacrifice in his mind, he would certainly have vowed the best of his flocks. From all this there can be no doubt that Jephthah must have been thinking of some human being as at all events included in his vow; so that when he declared that he would dedicate that which came out of his house to meet him, the meaning of the vow cannot

[1] *Augustine* observes in his *Quæst.* xlix. in *l. Jud.*: "He did not vow in these words that he would offer some *sheep*, which he might present as a holocaust, according to the law. For it is not, and was not, a customary thing for sheep to come out to meet a victorious general returning from the war. Nor did he say, I will offer as a holocaust *what*ever shall come out of the doors of my house to meet me; but he says, '*Who*ever comes out, I will offer *him*;' so that there can be no doubt whatever that he had then a human being in his mind."

[2] "What kind of vow would it be if some great prince or general should say, 'O God, if Thou wilt give me this victory, the first calf that meets me shall be Thine!' *Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus!*"—*Pfeiffer, dubia vex.* p. 356.

have been any other than that he would leave the choice of the sacrifice to God himself. "In his eagerness to smite the foe, and to thank God for it, Jephthah could not think of any particular object to name, which he could regard as great enough to dedicate to God; he therefore left it to accident, *i.e.* to the guidance of God, to determine the sacrifice. He shrank from measuring what was dearest to God, and left this to God himself" (*P. Cassel* in *Herzog's* Real-encycl.). Whomsoever God should bring to meet him, he would dedicate to Jehovah, and indeed, as is added afterwards by way of defining it more precisely, he would offer him to the Lord as a burnt-offering. The ו before וְהַעֲלִיתִיהוּ is to be taken as explanatory, and not as disjunctive in the sense of "*or*," which ו never has. But whether Jephthah really thought of his daughter at the time, cannot be determined either in the affirmative or negative. If he did, he no doubt hoped that the Lord would not demand this hardest of all sacrifices.—Vers. 32, 33. After seeking to ensure the help of the Lord by this vow, he went against the Ammonites to fight against them; and the Lord delivered them into his hand, so that Jephthah smote them in a very great slaughter "from *Aroër* (or Nahr Ammân; see ver. 26) to the neighbourhood of ('till thou come to;' see at Gen. x. 19) *Minnith*, (conquering and taking) twenty cities, and to *Abel Keramim* (of the vineyards)." *Minnith*, according to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Mennith*), was a place called *Manith* in the time of *Eusebius*, four Roman miles from Heshbon on the road to Philadelphia, with which the account given by *Buckingham* of the ruins of a large city a little to the east of Heshbon may be compared (see *v. Raum.* Pal. p. 265). The situation of *Abel Keramim* (plain of the vineyards: *Luther* and *Eng. Ver.*) cannot be determined with the same certainty. *Eusebius* and *Jerome* mention two places of this name (*Onom. s. v. Abel vinearum*), a *villa Abela vinetis consita* (κώμη ἀμπελοφόρος Ἄβελ) seven Roman miles from Philadelphia, and a *civitas nomine Abela vini fertilis* twelve Roman miles to the east of Gadara, and therefore in the neighbourhood of the Mandhur. Which of the two is referred to here remains uncertain, as we have no precise details concerning the battle. If the northern *Abela* should be meant, Jephthah would have pursued the foe first of all towards the south to the neighbourhood of Heshbon, and then to the north to the border of Bashan. Through this victory the Ammonites were completely subdued before the Israelites.

Vers. 34–40. JEPHTHAH'S VOW.—Vers. 34, 35. When the victorious hero returned to Mizpeh, his daughter came out to meet him "*with timbrels and in dances*," *i.e.* at the head of a company of women, who received the conqueror with joyous music and dances (see at Ex. xv. 20): "*and she was the only one; he had neither son nor daughter beside her.*" מִמֶּנּוּ cannot mean *ex se*, no other child of his own, though he may have had children that his wives had brought him by other husbands; but it stands, as the greater Masora has pointed it, for מִמֶּנָּה, "besides her," the daughter just mentioned,—the masculine being used for the feminine as the nearest and more general gender, simply because the idea of "*child*" was floating before the author's mind. At such a meeting Jephthah was violently agitated. Tearing his clothes (as a sign of his intense agony; see at Lev. x. 6), he exclaimed, "*O my daughter! thou hast brought me very low; it is thou who troublest me*" (*lit.* thou art among those who trouble me, thou belongest to their class, and indeed in the fullest sense of the word; this is the meaning of the so-called ב *essentiæ*: see *Ges.* Lehrgeb. p. 838, and such passages as 2 Sam. xv. 31, Ps. liv. 6, lv. 19, etc.): "*I have opened my mouth to the Lord* (*i.e.* have uttered a vow to Him: compare Ps. lxvi. 14 with Num. xxx. 3 sqq., Deut. xxiii. 23, 24), *and cannot turn it*," *i.e.* revoke it.—Ver. 36. The daughter, observing that the vow had reference to her (as her father in fact had, no doubt, distinctly told her, though the writer has passed this over because he had already given the vow itself in ver. 31), replied, "*Do to me as has gone out of thy mouth* (*i.e.* do to me what thou hast vowed), *since Jehovah has procured the vengeance upon thine enemies the Ammonites.*" She then added (ver. 37), "*Let this thing be done for me* (equivalent to, Let this only be granted me); *let me alone two months and I will go*," *i.e.* only give me two months to go, "*that I may go down to the mountains* (*i.e.* from Mizpeh, which stood upon an eminence, to the surrounding mountains and their valleys) *and bewail my virginity, I and my friends.*" בְּתוּלִים does not mean "youth" (נְעוּרִים), but the condition of virginity (see Lev. xxi. 13). The *Kethibh* רֵעָתַי is a less common form of רֵעוֹתַי (*Keri*). —Ver. 38. The father granted this request.—Ver. 39. At the end of two months she returned to her father again, "*and he did to her the vow that he had vowed, and she knew no man.*" In consequence of this act of Jephthah and his daughter, "*it became an ordinance* (a standing custom) *in Israel: from year to year* (see Ex. xiii. 10) *the daughters of Israel go to praise the daughter of Jephthah the*

*Gileadite four days in the year.*" תְּנַה does not mean θρηνεῖν, to lament or bewail (LXX., Chald., etc.), but to praise, as *R. Tanchum* and others maintain.

With regard to *Jephthah's vow*, the view expressed so distinctly by *Josephus* and the Chaldee was the one which generally prevailed in the earlier times among both Rabbins and fathers of the church, viz. that Jephthah put his daughter to death and burned her upon the altar as a bleeding sacrifice to Jehovah. It was not till the middle ages that *Mos.* and *Dav. Kimchi* and certain other Rabbins endeavoured to establish the view, that Jephthah merely dedicated his daughter to the service of the sanctuary of Jehovah in a lifelong virginity. And lastly, *Ludov. Cappellus*, in his *Diatriba de voto Jephtæ*, Salm. 1683 (which has been reprinted in his *Notæ critic.* in Jud. xi., and the *Critici Sacri*, tom. i.), has expressed the opinion that Jephthah put his daughter to death in honour of the Lord according to the law of the ban, because human beings were not allowed to be offered up as burnt-sacrifices. Of these different opinions the third has no foundation in the text of the Bible. For supposing that Jephthah had simply vowed that on his return he would offer to the Lord whatever came to meet him out of his house, with such restrictions only as were involved in the very nature of the case,—viz. offering it as a burnt-offering if it were adapted for this according to the law; and if it were not, then proceeding with it according to the law of the ban,—the account of the fulfilment of this vow would certainly have defined with greater precision the manner in which he fulfilled the vow upon his daughter. The words "he did to her his vow which he had vowed," cannot be understood in any other way than that he offered her as עוֹלָה, *i.e.* as a *burnt-offering*, to the Lord. Moreover, the law concerning the ban and a vow of the ban could not possibly give any individual Israelite the right to ban either his own child or one of his household to the Lord, without opening a very wide door to the crime of murder. The infliction of the ban upon any man presupposed notorious wickedness, so that burnt-offering and ban were diametrically opposed the one to the other. Consequently the other two views are the only ones which can be entertained, and it is not easy to decide between them. Although the words "and I offer him as a burnt-offering" appear to favour the actual sacrifice so strongly, that *Luther's* marginal note, "some affirm that he did not sacrifice her, but the text is clear enough," is perpetually repeated with peculiar emphasis; yet, on looking more closely into

the matter, we find insuperable difficulties in the way of the literal interpretation of the words. Since הַיּוֹצֵא אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא cannot be taken impersonally, and therefore when Jephthah uttered his vow, he must at any rate have had the possibility of some human being coming to meet him in his mind; and since the two clauses "*he shall be the Lord's*," and "*I will offer him up for a burnt-offering*," cannot be taken disjunctively in such a sense as this, it shall *either* be dedicated to the Lord, *or*, if it should be a sacrificial animal, I will offer it up as a burnt-offering, but the second clause simply contains a more precise definition of the first,—Jephthah must at the very outset have contemplated the possibility of a human sacrifice. Yet not only were human sacrifices prohibited in the law under pain of death as an abomination in the sight of Jehovah (Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 2–5; Deut. xii. 31, xviii. 10), but they were never heard of among the Israelites in the early times, and were only transplanted to Jerusalem by the godless kings Ahaz and Manasseh.[1] If Jephthah therefore vowed that he would offer a human sacrifice to Jehovah, he must either have uttered his vow without any reflection, or else have been thoroughly depraved in a moral and religious sense. But what we know of this brave hero by no means warrants any such assumptions. His acts do not show the slightest trace of impetuosity and rashness. He does not take to the sword at once, but waits till his negotiations with the king of the Ammonites have been without effect. Nor does he utter his vow in the midst of the confusion of battle, so that we might fancy he had made a vow in the heat of the conflict without fully weighing his words, but he uttered it before he set out against the Ammonites (see vers. 30 and 32). So far as the religious training of Jephthah was concerned, it is true that he had led the life of a freebooter during his exile from his country and home, and before his election as the leader of the Israelites; but the analogous circumstances connected with David's life preclude us from in-

[1] "Human sacrifices do not even belong to heathenism generally, but to the darkest night of heathenism. They only occur among those nations which are the most thoroughly depraved in a moral and religious sense." This remark of *Hengstenberg* (Diss. iii. p. 118) cannot be set aside by a reference to *Euseb. præp. ev.* iv. 16; *Baur*, Symb. ii. 2, pp. 293 sqq.; *Lasaulx*, Sühnopfer der Griechen und Römer, 1841, pp. 8–12; *Ghillany*, die Menschenopfer der alten Hebräer, 1842, pp. 107 sqq., as *Kurtz* supposes, since the uncritical character of the proofs collected together in these writings is very obvious on a closer inspection, and *Eusebius* has simply taken his examples from Porphyry, and other writings of a very recent date.

ferring either moral depravity or religious barbarism from this. When David was obliged to fly from his country to escape from Saul, he also led a life of the same kind, so that all sorts of people came to him, not pious and virtuous people, but all who were in distress and had creditors, or were embittered in spirit (1 Sam. xxii. 2); and yet, even under these circumstances, David lived in the law of the Lord. Moreover, Jephthah was not destitute of the fear of God. This is proved first of all by the fact, that when he had been recalled from his exile he looked to Jehovah to give him the victory over the Ammonites, and made a treaty with the elders of Gilead "before Jehovah" (vers. 9 and 10); and also by the fact, that he sought to ensure the help of God in war through the medium of a vow. And again, we have no right to attribute to him any ignorance of the law. Even if *Kurtz* is correct in his opinion, that the negotiations with the king of the Ammonites, which show the most accurate acquaintance with the Pentateuch, were not carried on independently and from his own knowledge of the law, and that the sending of messengers to the hostile king was resolved upon in the national assembly at Mizpeh, with the priests, Levites, and elders present, so that the Levites, who knew the law, may have supplied any defects in his own knowledge of the law and of the early history of his people; a private Israelite did not need to study the whole of the law of the Pentateuch, and to make himself master of the whole, in order to gain the knowledge and conviction that a human sacrifice was irreconcilable with the substance and spirit of the worship of Jehovah, and that Jehovah the God of Israel was not a Moloch. And again, even if we do not know to what extent the men and fathers of families in Israel were acquainted and familiar with the contents of the Mosaic law, the opinion is certainly an erroneous one, that the Israelites derived their knowledge of the law exclusively from the public reading of the law at the feast of tabernacles in the sabbatical year, as enjoined in Deut. xxxi. 10 sqq.; so that if this public reading, which was to take place only once in seven years, had been neglected, the whole nation would have been left without any instruction whatever in the law. The reason for this Mosaic precept was a totally different one from that of making the people acquainted with the contents of the law (see the commentary on this passage). And again, though we certainly do not find the law of the Lord so thoroughly pervading the religious consciousness of the people, received as it were *in succum et sanguinem*, in

the time of the judges, that they were able to resist the bewitching power of nature-worship, but, on the contrary, we find them repeatedly falling away into the worship of Baal; yet we discover no trace whatever of human sacrifices even in the case of those who went a whoring after Baalim. And although the theocratical knowledge of the law seems to have been somewhat corrupted even in the case of such men as Gideon, so that this judge had an unlawful ephod made for himself at Ophrah; the opinion that the Baal-worship, into which the Israelites repeatedly fell, was associated with human sacrifices, is one of the many erroneous ideas that have been entertained as to the development of the religious life not only among the Israelites, but among the Canaanites, and which cannot be supported by historical testimonies or facts. That the Canaanitish worship of Baal and Astarte, to which the Israelites were addicted, required no human sacrifices, is indisputably evident from the fact, that even in the time of Ahab and his idolatrous wife Jezebel, the daughter of the Sidonian king Ethbaal, who raised the worship of Baal into the national religion in the kingdom of the ten tribes, persecuting the prophets of Jehovah and putting them to death, there is not the slightest allusion to human sacrifices. Even at that time human sacrifices were regarded by the Israelites as so revolting an abomination, that the two kings of Israel who besieged the king of the Moabites—not only the godly Jehoshaphat, but Jehoram the son of Ahab and Jezebel—withdrew at once and relinquished the continuance of the war, when the king of the Moabites, in the extremity of his distress, sacrificed his son as a burnt-offering upon the wall (2 Kings iii. 26, 27). With such an attitude as this on the part of the Israelites towards human sacrifices before the time of Ahaz and Manasseh, who introduced the worship of Moloch into Jerusalem, we cannot, without further evidence, impute to Jephthah the offering of a bloody human sacrifice, the more especially as it is inconceivable, with the diametrical opposition between the worship of Jehovah and the worship of Moloch, that God should have chosen a worshipper of Moloch to carry out His work, or a man who was capable of vowing and offering a human-being sacrifice. The men whom God chose as the recipients of His revelation of mercy and the executors of His will, and whom He endowed with His Spirit as judges and leaders of His people, were no doubt affected with infirmities, faults, and sins of many kinds, so that they could fall to a very great depth; but nowhere is it stated that the Spirit of

God came upon a worshipper of Moloch and endowed him with His own power, that he might be the helper and saviour of Israel.

We cannot therefore regard Jephthah as a servant of Moloch, especially when we consider that, in addition to what has already been said, the account of the actual fulfilment of his vow is apparently irreconcilable with the literal interpretation of the words וְהַעֲלִיתִיהוּ עוֹלָה, as signifying a bleeding burnt-offering. We cannot infer anything with certainty as to the mode of the sacrifice, from the grief which Jephthah felt and expressed when his only daughter came to meet him. For this is quite as intelligible, as even the supporters of the literal view of these words admit, on the supposition that Jephthah was compelled by his vow to dedicate his daughter to Jehovah in a lifelong virginity, as it would be if he had been obliged to put her to death and burn her upon the altar as a burnt-offering. But the entreaty of the daughter, that he would grant her two months' time, in order that she might lament her virginity upon the mountains with her friends, would have been marvellously out of keeping with the account that she was to be put to death as a sacrifice. To mourn one's virginity does not mean to mourn because one has to die a virgin, but because one has to live and remain a virgin. But even if we were to assume that mourning her virginity was equivalent to mourning on account of her youth (which is quite untenable, as בְּתוּלִים is not synonymous with נְעוּרִים), "it would be impossible to understand why this should take place *upon the mountains*. It would be altogether opposed to human nature, that a child who had so soon to die should make use of a temporary respite to forsake her father altogether. It would no doubt be a reasonable thing that she should ask permission to enjoy life for two months longer before she was put to death; but that she should only think of bewailing her virginity, when a sacrificial death was in prospect, which would rob her father of his only child, would be contrary to all the ordinary feelings of the human heart. Yet, inasmuch as the history lays special emphasis upon her bewailing her virginity, this must have stood in some peculiar relation to the nature of the vow. When a maiden *bewails* her virginity, the reason for this can only be that she will have to remain a bud that has not been allowed to unfold itself, prevented, too, not by death, but by life" (*P. Cassel*, p. 473). And this is confirmed by the expression, to bewail her virginity "*upon the mountains*." "If life had been in question, the same tears might have been shed at home. But her lamentations were devoted to her virginity, and

such lamentations could not be uttered in the town, and in the presence of men. Modesty required the solitude of the mountains for these. The virtuous heart of the maiden does not open itself in the ears of all; but only in sacred silence does it pour out its lamentations of love" (*P. Cassel*, p. 476). And so, again, the still further clause in the account of the fulfilment of the vow, "and she knew no man," is not in harmony with the assumption of a sacrificial death. This clause would add nothing to the description in that case, since it was already known that she was a virgin. The words only gain their proper sense if we connect them with the previous clause, he "did with her according to the vow which he had vowed," and understand them as describing what the daughter did in fulfilment of the vow. The father fulfilled his vow upon her, and she knew no man; *i.e.* he fulfilled the vow through the fact that she knew no man, but dedicated her life to the Lord, as a spiritual burnt-offering, in a lifelong chastity. It was this willingness of the daughter to sacrifice herself which the daughters of Israel went every year to celebrate,—namely, upon the mountains whither her friends had gone with her to lament her virginity, and which they commemorated there four days in the year. And the idea of a spiritual sacrifice is supported not only by the words, but also most decisively by the fact that the historian describes the fulfilment of the vow in the words "he did to her according to his vow," in such a manner as to lead to the conclusion that he regarded the act itself as laudable and good. But a prophetic historian could never have approved of a human sacrifice; and it is evident that the author of the book of Judges does not conceal what was blameable even in the judges themselves, from his remarks concerning the conduct of Gideon (chap. viii. 27), which was only a very small offence in comparison with the abomination of a human sacrifice. To this we have to add the difficulties connected with such an act. The words "he did to her according to his vow" presuppose undoubtedly that Jephthah offered his daughter as עוֹלָה to Jehovah. But burnt-offerings, that is to say bleeding burnt-offerings, in which the victim was slaughtered and burnt upon the altar, could only be offered upon the lawful altar at the tabernacle, or before the ark, through the medium of the Levitical priests, unless the sacrifice itself had been occasioned by some extraordinary manifestation of God; and that we cannot for a moment think of here. But is it credible that a priest or the priesthood should have consented to offer a sacrifice upon the altar of Jehovah which was denounced in

the law as the greatest abomination of the heathen? This difficulty cannot be set aside by assuming that Jephthah put his daughter to death, and burned her upon some secret altar, without the assistance and mediation of a priest; for such an act would not have been described by the prophetic historian as a fulfilment of the vow that he would offer a burnt-offering to the Lord, simply because it would not have been a sacrifice offered to Jehovah at all, but a sacrifice slaughtered to Moloch.[1]

All these circumstances, when rightly considered, almost compel us to adopt the spiritual interpretation of the words "offer as a burnt-offering." It is true that no exactly corresponding parallelisms can be adduced from the Old Testament in support of the spiritual view; but the germs of this view, as met with in the Psalms and the writings of the prophets, are contained in the demand of God addressed to Abraham to offer Him his only son Isaac as a burnt-offering, when compared with the issue of Abraham's temptation,—namely, that God accepted his willingness to offer up his son as a completed sacrifice, and then supplied him with a ram to offer up as a bleeding sacrifice in the place of his son. As this fact teaches that what God demands is not a corporeal but a spiritual sacrifice, so the rules laid down in the law respecting the redemption of the first-born belonging to the Lord, and of persons vowed to Him (Ex. xiii. 1, 13; Num. xviii. 15, 16; Lev. xxvii. 1 sqq.), show clearly how the Israelites could dedicate themselves and those who belonged to them to the Lord, without burning upon the altar the persons who were vowed to Him. And lastly, it is evident, from the perfectly casual reference to the women who

[1] *Auberlen's* remarks upon this subject are very good. "The history of Jephthah's daughter," he says, "would hardly have been thought worth preserving in the Scriptures if the maiden had been really offered in sacrifice; for, in that case, the event would have been reduced, at the best, into a mere family history, without any theocratic significance, though in truth it would rather have been an anti-theocratic *abomination*, according to Deut. xii. 31 (cf. chap. xviii. 9, Lev. xviii. 21, xx. 1–5). Jephthah's action would in that case have stood upon the same platform as the incest of Lot (Gen. xix. 30 sqq.), and would owe its adoption into the canon simply to genealogical considerations, or others of a similar kind. But the very opposite is the case here; and if, from the conclusion of the whole narrative in chap. xi. 39, 40, the object of it is supposed to be simply to explain the origin of the feast that was held in honour of Jephthah's daughter, even this would tell against the ordinary view. In the eye of the law the whole thing would still remain an abomination, and the canonical Scriptures would not stoop to relate and beautify an institution so directly opposed to the law."

ministered at the tabernacle (Ex. xxxviii. 8; 1 Sam. ii. 22), that there were persons in Israel who dedicated their lives to the Lord at the sanctuary, by altogether renouncing the world. And there can be no doubt that Jephthah had such a dedication as this in his mind when he uttered his vow; at all events in case the Lord, to whom he left the appointment of the sacrifice, should demand the offering up of a human being. The word עוֹלָה does not involve the idea of burning, like our word burnt-offering, but simply that of going up upon the altar, or of complete surrender to the Lord. עוֹלָה is a whole offering, as distinguished from the other sacrifices, of which only a part was given up to the Lord. When a virgin, therefore, was set apart as a spiritual עוֹלָה, it followed, as a matter of course, that henceforth she belonged entirely to the Lord: that is to say, was to remain a virgin for the remainder of her days. The fact that Nazarites contracted marriages, even such as were dedicated by a vow to be Nazarites all their lives, by no means warrants the conclusion that virgins dedicated to the Lord by a vow were also free to marry if they chose. It is true that we learn nothing definite from the Old Testament with regard to this spiritual sacrificial service; but the absence of any distinct statements upon the subject by no means warrants our denying the fact. Even with regard to the spiritual service of the women at the tabernacle we have no precise information; and we should not have known anything about this institution, if the women themselves had not offered their mirrors in the time of Moses to make the holy laver, or if we had not the account of the violation of such women by the sons of Eli. In this respect, therefore, the remarks of *Clericus*, though too frequently disregarded, are very true: "It was not to be expected, as I have often observed, that so small a volume as the Old Testament should contain all the customs of the Hebrews, and a full account of all the things that were done among them. There are necessarily many things alluded to, therefore, which we do not fully understand, simply because they are not mentioned elsewhere."

Chap. xii. 1–7. JEPHTHAH'S WAR WITH THE EPHRAIMITES, AND OFFICE OF JUDGE.—Ver. 1. The jealousy of the tribe of Ephraim, which was striving after the leadership, had already shown itself in the time of Gideon in such a way that nothing but the moderation of that judge averted open hostilities. And now that the tribes on the east of the Jordan had conquered the

Ammonites under the command of Jephthah without the co-operation of the Ephraimites, Ephraim thought it necessary to assert its claim to take the lead in Israel in a very forcible manner. The Ephraimites gathered themselves together, and went over צָפוֹנָה. This is generally regarded as an appellative noun (*northward*); but in all probability it is a proper name, "to *Zaphon*," the city of the Gadites in the Jordan valley, which is mentioned in Josh. xiii. 27 along with Succoth, that is to say, according to a statement of the *Gemara*, though of a very uncertain character no doubt, Ἀμαθοῦς (*Joseph.* Ant. xiii. 13, 5, xiv. 5, 4; Bell. Jud. i. 4, 2; *Reland*, Pal. pp. 308 and 559–60), the modern ruins of *Amata* on the Wady *Rajîb* or *Ajlun*, the situation of which would suit this passage very well. They then threatened Jephthah, because he had made war upon the Ammonites without them, and said, "*We will burn thy house over thee with fire.*" This arrogance and threat Jephthah opposed most energetically. He replied (vers. 2, 3), "*A man of strife have I been, I and my people on the one hand, and the children of Ammon on the other, very greatly*," *i.e.* I and my people had a severe conflict with the Ammonites. "*Then I called you, but ye did not deliver me out of their hand; and when I saw that thou* (Ephraim) *didst not help me, I put my life in my hand*" (*i.e.* I risked my own life: see 1 Sam. xix. 5, xxviii. 21, Job xiii. 14. The *Kethibh* אִישְׁמָה comes from יָשַׂם: cf. Gen. xxiv. 33), "*and I went against the Ammonites, and Jehovah gave them into my hand.*" Jephthah's appeal to the Ephraimites to fight against the Ammonites is not mentioned in chap. xi., probably for no other reason than because it was without effect. The Ephraimites, however, had very likely refused their co-operation simply because the Gileadites had appointed Jephthah as commander without consulting them. Consequently the Ephraimites had no ground whatever for rising up against Jephthah and the Gileadites in this haughty and hostile manner; and Jephthah had a perfect right not only to ask them, "*Wherefore are ye come up against me now* (*lit.* 'this day'), to *fight against me?*" but to resist such conduct with the sword.—Ver. 4. He therefore gathered together all the men (men of war) of Gilead and smote the Ephraimites, because they had said, "*Ye Gileadites are fugitives of Ephraim in the midst of Ephraim and Manasseh.*" The meaning of these obscure words is probably the following: Ye Gileadites are a mob gathered together from Ephraimites that have run away; "ye are an obscure set of men, men of no name, dwelling in the midst of two most noble and illustrious tribes"

(*Rosenmüller*). This contemptuous speech did not apply to the tribes of Reuben and Gad as such, but simply to the warriors whom Jephthah had gathered together out of Gilead. For the words are not to be rendered *erepti Ephraim*, "the rescued of Ephraim," as they are by *Seb. Schmidt* and *Stud.*, or to be understood as referring to the fact that the Gileadites had found refuge with the Ephraimites during the eighteen years of oppression on the part of the Ammonites, since such an explanation is at variance with the use of the word פָּלִיט, which simply denotes a fugitive who has escaped from danger, and not one who has sought and found protection with another. The Ephraimites had to pay for this insult offered to their brethren by a terrible defeat.—Ver. 5. When the Gileadites had beaten the Ephraimites, they took the fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites (or towards Ephraim: see chap. iii. 28, vii. 24), to cut off their retreat and prevent their return to their homes. And "*when fugitives of Ephraim wanted to cross, the men of Gilead asked them, Art thou Ephrathi*," *i.e.* an Ephraimite? *And if he said no*, they made him pronounce the word *Shibboleth* (a stream or flood, as in Ps. lxix. 3, 16; not an ear of corn, which is quite unsuitable here); "*and if he said, Sibboleth, not taking care to pronounce it correctly, they laid hold of him and put him to death at the fords of the Jordan.*" In this manner there fell at that time, *i.e.* during the whole war, 42,000 Ephraimites. The "*fugitives of Ephraim*" were the Ephraimites who had escaped from the battle and wished to return home. The expression is used here in its ordinary sense, and not with the contemptuous sense in which the Ephraimites had used it in ver. 4. From this history we learn quite casually that the Ephraimites generally pronounced *sh* (shin) like *s* (samech). הֵכִין is used elliptically for לֵב הֵכִין, to direct his heart to anything, pay heed (compare 1 Sam. xxiii. 22, 1 Chron. xxviii. 2, with 2 Chron. xii. 14, xxx. 19).—Ver. 7. Jephthah judged Israel six years, though most probably only the tribes on the east of the Jordan. When he died, he was buried in one of the towns of Gilead. The plural בְּעָרֵי גִלְעָד is used quite indefinitely, as in Gen. xiii. 12, Neh. vi. 2, etc. (see *Ges.* Lehrgeb. p. 665), simply because the historian did not know the exact town.

*The Judges Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon.*—Chap. xii. 8–15.

Of these three judges no particular deeds are related, just as in the case of Tola and Jair (see the remarks on chap. x. 1). But it certainly follows from the expression וַיִּשְׁפֹּט אַחֲרָיו (vers. 8, 11, 13)

that they were one after another successors of Jephthah, and therefore that their office of judge also extended simply over the tribes on the east of the Jordan, and perhaps the northern tribes on this side.—Vers. 8, 9. *Ibzan* sprang from *Bethlehem*,—hardly, however, the town of that name in the tribe of Judah, as *Josephus* affirms (Ant. v. 7, 13), for that is generally distinguished either as Bethlehem "of Judah" (chap. xvii. 7, 9; Ruth i. 2; 1 Sam. xvii. 12), or Bethlehem *Ephratah* (Micah v. 1), but probably Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun (Josh. ix. 15). He had thirty sons and thirty daughters, the latter of whom he sent away מֵהַחוּצָה (out of his house), *i.e.* gave them in marriage, and brought home thirty women in their places from abroad as wives for his sons. He judged Israel seven years, and was buried in Bethlehem.—Vers. 11, 12. His successor was *Elon* the Zebulunite, who died after filling the office of judge for ten years, and was buried at *Aijalon*, in the land of Zebulun. This *Aijalon* has probably been preserved in the ruins of *Jalûn*, about four hours' journey to the east of Akka, and half an hour to the s.s.w. of Mejdel Kerun (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 283).—Vers. 13–15. He was followed by the judge *Abdon*, the son of Hillel of *Pirathon*. This place, where Abdon died and was buried after holding the office of judge for eight years, was in the land of Ephraim, on the mountains of the Amalekites (ver. 15). It is mentioned in 2 Sam. xxiii. 30 and 1 Chron. xi. 31 as the home of Benaiah the hero; it is the same as Φαραθώ (read Φαραθών) in 1 Macc. ix. 50, and *Joseph.* Ant. xiii. 1, 3, and has been preserved in the village of *Feráta*, about two hours and a half to the s.s.w. of Nabulus (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. p. 134, and *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 340). On the riding of his sons and daughters upon asses, see at chap. x. 4.

*Samson's Life, and Conflicts with the Philistines.*—Chap. xiii.–xvi.

Whilst Jephthah, in the power of God, was delivering the tribes on the east of the Jordan from the oppression of the Ammonites, the oppression on the part of the Philistines continued uninterruptedly for forty years in the land to the west of the Jordan (chap. xiii. 1), and probably increased more and more after the disastrous war during the closing years of the high-priesthood of Eli, in which the Israelites suffered a sad defeat, and even lost the ark of the covenant, which was taken by the Philistines (1 Sam. iv.). But even during this period, Jehovah the God of Israel did not leave himself without witness, either in the case of His enemies the Philistines, or in that of His people Israel. The triumphant

delight of the Philistines at the capture of the ark was soon changed into great and mortal terror, when Dagon their idol had fallen down from its place before the ark of God and was lying upon the threshold of its temple with broken head and arms; and the inhabitants of Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, to which the ark was taken, were so severely smitten with boils by the hand of Jehovah, that the princes of the Philistines felt constrained to send the ark, which brought nothing but harm to their people, back into the land of the Israelites, and with it a trespass-offering (1 Sam. v. vi.). At this time the Lord had also raised up a hero for His people in the person of *Samson*, whose deeds were to prove to the Israelites and Philistines that the God of Israel still possessed the power to help His people and smite His foes.

The life and acts of *Samson*, who was to begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines, and who judged Israel for twenty years under the rule of the Philistines (chap. xiii. 5 and xv. 20), are described in chap. xiii.–xvi. with an elaborate fulness which seems quite out of proportion to the help and deliverance which he brought to his people. His birth was foretold to his parents by an appearance of the angel of the Lord, and the boy was set apart as a Nazarite from his mother's womb. When he had grown up, the Spirit of Jehovah began to drive him to seek occasions for showing the Philistines his marvellous strength, and to inflict severe blows upon them in a series of wonderful feats, until at length he was seduced by the bewitching Delilah to make known to her the secret of his supernatural strength, and was betrayed by her into the power of the Philistines, who deprived him of the sight of his eyes, and compelled him to perform the hardest and most degraded kinds of slave-labour. From this he was only able to escape by bringing about his own death, which he did in such a manner that his enemies were unable to triumph over him, since he killed more of them at his death than he had killed during the whole of his life before. And whilst the small results that followed from the acts of this hero of God do not answer the expectations that might naturally be formed from the miraculous announcement of his birth, the nature of the acts which he performed appears still less to be such as we should expect from a hero impelled by the Spirit of God. His actions not only bear the stamp of adventure, foolhardiness, and wilfulness, when looked at outwardly, but they are almost all associated with love affairs; so that it looks as if Samson had dishonoured and fooled away the gift entrusted to him, by

making it subservient to his sensual lusts, and thus had prepared the way for his own ruin, without bringing any essential help to his people. "The man who carried the gates of Gaza up to the top of the mountain was the slave of a woman, to whom he frivolously betrayed the strength of his Nazarite locks. These locks grew once more, and his strength returned, but only to bring death at the same time to himself and his foes" (*Ziegler*). Are we to discern in such a character as this a warrior of the Lord? Can Samson, the promised son of a barren woman, a Nazarite from his birth, be the head and flower of the judges? We do not pretend to answer these questions in the affirmative; and to justify this view we start from the fact, which *Ewald* and *Diestel* both admit to be historical, that the deep earnest background of Samson's nature is to be sought for in his Nazarite condition, or rather that it is in this that the distinctive significance of his character and of his life and deeds as judge all culminates. The Nazarite was not indeed what *Bertheau* supposes him to have been, "a man separated from human pursuits and turmoil;" but the significance of the Nazarite condition was to be found in a consecration of the life to God, which had its roots in living faith, and its outward manifestations negatively, in abstinence from everything unclean, from drinking wine, and even from fruit of the vine of every description, and positively, in wearing the hair uncut. In the case of Samson this consecration of the life to God was not an act of his own free will, or a vow voluntarily taken; but it was imposed upon him by divine command from his conception and birth. As a Nazarite, *i.e.* as a person vowed to the Lord, he was to begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines; and the bodily sign of his Nazarite condition—namely, the hair of his head that had never been touched by the scissors—was the vehicle of his supernatural strength with which he smote the Philistines. In Samson the Nazarite, however, not only did the Lord design to set before His people a man towering above the fallen generation in heroic strength, through his firm faith in and confident reliance upon the gift of God committed to him, opening up before it the prospect of a renewal of its own strength, that by this type he might arouse such strength and ability as were still slumbering in the nation; but Samson was to exhibit to his age generally a picture on the one hand of the strength which the people of God might acquire to overcome their strongest foes through faithful submission to the Lord their God, and on the other hand of the weakness into which they had sunk

through unfaithfulness to the covenant and intercourse with the heathen. And it is in this typical character of Samson and his deeds that we find the head and flower of the institution of judge in Israel.

The judges whom Jehovah raised up in the interval between Joshua and Samuel were neither military commanders nor governors of the nation; nor were they authorities instituted by God and invested with the government of the state. They were not even chosen from the heads of the nation, but were called by the Lord out of the midst of their brethren to be the deliverers of the nation, either through His Spirit which came upon them, or through prophets and extraordinary manifestations of God; and the influence which they exerted, after the conquest and humiliation of the foe and up to the time of their death, upon the government of the nation and its affairs in general, was not the result of any official rank, but simply the fruit and consequence of their personal ability, and therefore extended for the most part only to those tribes to whom they had brought deliverance from the oppression of their foes. The tribes of Israel did not want any common secular ruler to fulfil the task that devolved upon the nation at that time (see p. 240). God therefore raised up even the judges only in times of distress and trouble. For their appearance and work were simply intended to manifest the power which the Lord could confer upon His people through His Spirit, and were designed, on the one hand, to encourage Israel to turn seriously to its God, and by holding fast to His covenant to obtain the power to conquer all its foes; and, on the other hand, to alarm their enemies, that they might not attribute to their idols the power which they possessed to subjugate the Israelites, but might learn to fear the omnipotence of the true God. This divine power which was displayed by the judges culminated in Samson. When the Spirit of God came upon him, he performed such mighty deeds as made the haughty Philistines feel the omnipotence of Jehovah. And this power he possessed by virtue of his condition as a Nazarite, because he had been vowed or dedicated to the Lord from his mother's womb, so long as he remained faithful to the vow that had been imposed upon him.

But just as his strength depended upon the faithful observance of his vow, so his weakness became apparent in his natural character, particularly in his intrigues with the daughters of the Philistines; and in this weakness there was reflected the natural character of the nation generally, and of its constant disposition to fraternize with the heathen. Love to a Philistine woman in

Timnath not only supplied Samson with the first occasion to exhibit his heroic strength to the Philistines, but involved him in a series of conflicts in which he inflicted severe blows upon the uncircumcised. This impulse to fight against the Philistines came from Jehovah (chap. xiv. 4), and in these conflicts Jehovah assisted him with the power of His Spirit, and even opened up a fountain of water for him at Lehi in the midst of his severe fight, for the purpose of reviving his exhausted strength (chap. xv. 19). On the other hand, in his intercourse with the harlot at Gaza, and his love affair with Delilah, he trod ways of the flesh which led to his ruin. In his destruction, which was brought about by his forfeiture of the pledge of the divine gift entrusted to him, the insufficiency of the judgeship in itself to procure for the people of God supremacy over their foes became fully manifest; so that the weakness of the judgeship culminated in Samson as well as its strength. The power of the Spirit of God, bestowed upon the judges for the deliverance of their people, was overpowered by the might of the flesh lusting against the spirit.

This special call received from God will explain the peculiarities observable in the acts which he performed,—not only the smallness of the outward results of his heroic acts, but the character of adventurous boldness by which they were distinguished. Although he had been set apart as a Nazarite from his mother's womb, he was not to complete the deliverance of his people from the hands of the Philistines, but simply to commence it, *i.e.* to show to the people, by the manifestation of supernatural heroic power, the possibility of deliverance, or to exhibit the strength with which a man could slay a thousand foes. To answer this purpose, it was necessary that the acts of Samson should differ from those of the judges who fought at the head of military forces, and should exhibit the stamp of confidence and boldness in the full consciousness of possessing divine and invincible power.

But whilst the spirit which prevailed in Israel during the time of the judges culminated in the nature and deeds of Samson both in its weakness and strength, the miraculous character of his deeds, regarded simply in themselves, affords no ground for pronouncing the account a mere legend which has transformed historical acts into miracles, except from a naturalistic point of view, which rejects all miracles, and therefore denies *a priori* the supernatural working of the living God in the midst of His people. The formal character of the whole of the history of Samson, which the oppo-

nents of the biblical revelation adduce for the further support of this view, does not yield any tenable evidence of its correctness. The external rounding off of the account proves nothing more than that Samson's life and acts formed in themselves a compact and well-rounded whole. But the assertion, that "well-rounded circumstances form a suitable framework for the separate accounts, and that precisely twelve acts are related of Samson, which are united into beautiful pictures and narrated in artistic order" (*Bertheau*), is at variance with the actual character of the biblical account. In order to get exactly twelve heroic acts, *Bertheau* has to fix the stamp of a heroic act performed by Samson himself upon the miraculous help which he received from God through the opening up of a spring of water (chap. xv. 18, 19), and also to split up a closely connected event, such as his breaking the bonds three times, into three different actions.[1] If we simply confine ourselves to the biblical account, the acts of Samson may be divided into two parts. The *first* (chap. xiv. and xv.) contains those in which Samson smote the Philistines with gradually increasing severity; the *second* (chap. xvi.) those by which he brought about his own fall and ruin. These are separated from one another by the account of the time that his judgeship lasted (chap. xv. 20), and this account is briefly repeated at the close of the whole account (chap. xvi. 31). The *first* part includes six distinct acts which are grouped together in twos: viz. (1 and 2) the killing of the lion on the way to Timnath, and the slaughter of the thirty Philistines for the purpose of paying for the solution of his riddle with the clothes that he took off them (chap. xiv.); (3 and 4) his revenge upon the Philistines by burning their crops, because his wife had been given to a Philistine, and also by the great slaughter with which he punished them for having

[1] On these grounds, *L. Diestel*, in the article *Samson* in *Herzog's* Cycl., has rejected *Bertheau's* enumeration as unsatisfactory; and also the division proposed by *Ewald* into five acts with three turns in each, because, in order to arrive at this grouping, *Ewald* is not only obliged to refer the general statement in chap. xiii. 25, "the Spirit of God began to drive Samson," to some heroic deed which is not described, but has also to assume that in the case of one act (the carrying away of the gates of Gaza) the last two steps of the legend are omitted from the present account, although in all the rest *Diestel* follows *Ewald's* view almost without exception. The views advanced by *Ewald* and *Bertheau* form the foundation of *Roskoff's* Monograph, "the legend of Samson in its origin, form, and signification, and the legend of Hercules," in which the legend of Samson is regarded as an Israelitish form of that of Hercules.

burned his father-in-law and wife (chap. xv. 1–8); (5 and 6) the bursting of the cords with which his countrymen had bound him for the purpose of delivering him up to the Philistines, and the slaying of 1000 Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass (chap. xv. 9–19). The *second* part of his life comprises only three acts: viz. (1) taking off the town gates of Gaza, and carrying them away (chap. xvi. 1–3); (2) breaking the bonds with which Delilah bound him three separate times (chap. xvi. 4–14); and (3) his heroic death through pulling down the temple of Dagon, after he had been delivered into the power of the Philistines through the treachery of Delilah, and had been blinded by them (chap. xvi. 15–31). In this arrangement there is no such artistic shaping or rounding off of the historical materials apparent, as could indicate any mythological decoration. And lastly, the popular language of Samson in proverbs, rhymes, and a play upon words, does not warrant us in maintaining that the popular legend invented this mode of expressing his thoughts, and put the words into his mouth. All this leads to the conclusion, that there is no good ground for calling in question the historical character of the whole account of Samson's life and deeds.[1]

Chap. xiii. BIRTH OF SAMSON.—Ver. 1. The oppression of the Israelites by the Philistines, which is briefly hinted at in chap. x. 7, is noticed again here with the standing formula, "*And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord*," etc. (cf. chap. x. 6, iv. 1, iii. 12), as an introduction to the account of the life and acts of *Samson*, who began to deliver Israel from the hands of these enemies. Not only the birth of Samson, but the prediction of his birth, also fell, according to ver. 5, within the period of the rule of the Philistines over Israel. Now, as their oppression lasted forty years, and Samson judged Israel for twenty years during that

[1] No safe or even probable conjecture can be drawn from the character of the history before us, with reference to the first written record of the life of Samson, or the sources which the author of our book of Judges made use of for this portion of his work. The recurrence of such expressions as יָחֵל followed by an infinitive (chap. xiii. 5, 25, xvi. 19, 22), פָּתַי (chap. xiv. 15, xvi. 5), חָצַיק (chap. xiv. 17, xvi. 16, etc.), upon which *Bertheau* lays such stress, arises from the actual contents of the narrative itself. The same expressions also occur in other places where the thought requires them, and therefore they form no such peculiarities of style as to warrant the conclusion that the life of Samson was the subject of a separate work (*Ewald*), or that it was a fragment taken from a larger history of the wars of the Philistines (*Bertheau*).

oppression (chap. xv. 20, xvi. 31), he must have commenced his judgeship at an early age, probably before the completion of his twentieth year; and with this the statement in chap. xiv., that his marriage with a Philistine woman furnished the occasion for his conflicts with these enemies of his people, fully agrees. The end of the forty years of the supremacy of the Philistines is not given in this book, which closes with the death of Samson. It did not terminate till the great victory which the Israelites gained over their enemies under the command of Samuel (1 Sam. vii.). Twenty years before this victory the Philistines had sent back the ark which they had taken from the Israelites, after keeping it for seven months in their own land (1 Sam. vii. 2, and vi. 1). It was within these twenty years that most of the acts of Samson occurred. His first affair with the Philistines, however, namely on the occasion of his marriage, took place a year or two before this defeat of the Israelites, in which the sons of Eli were slain, the ark fell into the hands of the Philistines, and the high priest Eli fell from his seat and broke his neck on receiving the terrible news (1 Sam. iv. 18). Consequently Eli died a short time after the first appearance of Samson (see p. 282).

Vers. 2–7. Whilst the Israelites were given into the hands of the Philistines on account of their sins, and were also severely oppressed in Gilead on the part of the Ammonites, the angel of the Lord appeared to the wife of Manoah, a Danite from *Zorea, i.e. Sur'a*, on the western slope of the mountains of Judah (see at Josh. xv. 33). *Mishpachath Dani* (the family of the Danites) is used interchangeably with *shebet Dani* (the tribe of the Danites: see chap. xviii. 2, 11, and xviii. 1, 30), which may be explained on this ground, that according to Num. xxvi. 42, 43, all the Danites formed but one family, viz. the family of the Shuhamites. The angel of the Lord announced to this woman, who was barren, "*Thou wilt conceive and bear a son. And now beware, drink no wine or strong drink, and eat nothing unclean: for, behold, thou wilt conceive and bear a son, and no razor shall come upon his head; for a vowed man of God (Nazir) will the boy be from his mother's womb*," *i.e.* his whole life long, "*to the day of his death*," as the angel expressly affirmed, according to ver. 7. The three prohibitions which the angel of the Lord imposed upon the woman were the three things which distinguished the condition of a Nazarite (see at Num. vi. 1–8, and the explanation given there of the Nazarite vow). The only other thing mentioned in the Mosaic law is the warning against

defilement from contact with the dead, which does not seem to have been enforced in the case of Samson. When the angel added still further, "*And he* (the Nazarite) *will begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines*," he no doubt intended to show that his power to effect this deliverance would be closely connected with his condition as a Nazarite. The promised son was to be a Nazarite all his life long, because he was to begin to deliver Israel out of the power of his foes. And in order that he might be so, his mother was to share in the renunciations of the Nazarite vow during the time of her pregnancy. Whilst the appearance of the angel of the Lord contained the practical pledge that the Lord still acknowledged His people, though He had given them into the hands of their enemies; the message of the angel contained this lesson and warning for Israel, that it could only obtain deliverance from its foes by seeking after a life of consecration to the Lord, such as the Nazarites pursued, so as to realize the idea of the priestly character to which Israel had been called as the people of Jehovah, by abstinence from the *deliciæ carnis*, and everything that was unclean, as being emanations of sin, and also by a complete self-surrender to the Lord (see Pentateuch, vol. iii. p. 38).—Vers. 6, 7. The woman told her husband of this appearance: "*A man of God*," she said (*lit. the* man of God, viz. the one just referred to), "*came to me, and his appearance was like the appearance of the angel of God, very terrible; and I asked him not whence he was, neither told he me his name*," etc. "*Man of God*" was the expression used to denote a prophet, or a man who stood in immediate intercourse with God, such as Moses and others (see at Deut. xxxiii. 1). "*Angel of God*" is equivalent to "angel of the Lord" (chap. ii. 1, vi. 11), the angel in whom the invisible God reveals himself to men. The woman therefore imagined the person who appeared to her to have been a prophet, whose majestic appearance, however, had produced the impression that he was a superior being; consequently she had not ventured to ask him either his name or where he came from.

Vers. 8–20. Being firmly convinced of the truth of this announcement, and at the same time reflecting upon the obligation which it imposed upon the parents, Manoah prayed to the Lord that He would let the man of God whom He had sent come to them again, to teach them what they were to do to the boy that should be born, *i.e.* how they should treat him. יַיּוּלָד, according to the *Keri* יִוָּלֵד, is a participle *Pual* with the נ dropped (see *Ewald*, § 169, *b.*). This prayer was heard. The angel of God appeared

once more to the woman when she was sitting alone in the field without her husband.—Vers. 10, 11. Then she hastened to fetch her husband, who first of all inquired of the person who had appeared, "*Art thou the man who said to the woman*" (*sc.* what has been related in vers. 3–5)? And when this was answered in the affirmative, he said still further (ver. 12), "*Should thy word then come to pass, what will be the manner of the boy, and his doing?*" The plural דְּבָרֶיךָ is construed *ad sensum* with a singular verb, because the words form one promise, so that the expression is not to be taken distributively, as *Rosenmüller* supposes. This also applies to ver. 17. *Mishpat*, the right belonging to the boy, *i.e.* the proper treatment of him.—Vers. 13, 14. The angel of the Lord then repeated the instructions which he had already given to the woman in ver. 4, simply adding to the prohibition of wine and strong drink the caution not to eat of anything that came from the vine, in accordance with Num. vi. 3.—Ver. 15. As Manoah had not yet recognised in the man the angel of the Lord, as is observed by way of explanation in ver. 16, he wished, like Gideon (chap. vi. 18), to give a hospitable entertainment to the man who had brought him such joyful tidings, and therefore said to him, "*Let us detain thee, and prepare a kid for thee.*" The construction נַעֲשֶׂה לְפָנֶיךָ is a pregnant one: "prepare and set before thee." On the fact itself, see chap. vi. 19.—Ver. 16. The angel of the Lord replied, "*If thou wilt detain me* (*sc.* that I may eat), *I will not eat of thy food* (אֹכַל with בְּ, to eat thereat, *i.e.* thereof, as in Ex. xii. 43, Lev. xxii. 11); *but if thou wilt prepare a burnt-offering for Jehovah, then offer it.*"—Ver. 17. Manoah then asked his name: מִי שְׁמֶךָ, *lit.* "*Who is thy name?*" מִי inquires after the person; מָה, the nature or quality (see *Ewald*, § 325, *a.*). "*For if thy word come to pass, we will do thee honour.*" This was the reason why he asked after his name. כִּבֵּד, to honour by presents, so as to show one's self grateful (see Num. xxii. 17, 37, xxiv. 11).—Ver. 18. The angel replied, "*Why askest thou then after my name? truly it is wonderful.*" The *Kethibh* פלאי is the adjectival form פִּלְאִי from פֶּלֶא, for which the *Keri* has פֶּלִי, the pausal form of פִּלְאִי (from the radical פָּלָה = פָּלָא). The word therefore is not the proper name of the angel of the Lord, but expresses the character of his name; and as the name simply denotes the nature, it expresses the peculiarity of his nature also. It is to be understood in an absolute sense—"absolutely and supremely wonderful" (*Seb. Schmidt*)—as a predicate belonging to God alone (compare the term "Wonderful" in Isa. ix. 6), and not to be toned down as it is by *Bertheau*,

who explains it as signifying "neither easy to utter nor easy to comprehend."—Vers. 19, 20. Manoah then took the kid and the *minchah*, *i.e.*, according to Num. xv. 4 sqq., the meat-offering belonging to the burnt-offering, and offered it upon the rock, which is called an altar in ver. 20, because the angel of the Lord, who is of one nature with God, had sanctified it as an altar through the miraculous acceptance of the sacrifice. מַפְלִא לַעֲשׂוֹת, "*and wonderfully* (miraculously) *did he act*" (הִפְלִיא followed by the infinitive with לְ as in 2 Chron. xxvi. 15). These words form a circumstantial clause, which is not to be attached, however, to the subject of the principal clause, but to לַיהוָה: "Manoah offered the sacrifice to the Lord, whereupon He acted to do wonderfully, *i.e.* He performed a wonder or miracle, and Manoah and his wife saw it" (see *Ewald*, Lehrb. § 341, *b.*; p. 724, note). In what the miracle consisted is explained in ver. 20, in the words, "*when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar;*" that is to say, in the fact that a flame issued from the rock, as in the case of Gideon's sacrifice (chap. vi. 21), and consumed the sacrifice. And the angel of the Lord ascended in this flame. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they fell upon their faces to the earth (*sc.* in worship), because they discovered from the miracle that it was the angel of the Lord who had appeared to them.

Vers. 21–25. From that time forward the Lord did not appear to them again. But Manoah was afraid that he and his wife should die, because they had seen God (on this belief, see the remarks on Gen. xvi. 13 and Ex. xxxiii. 20). His wife quieted his fears, however, and said, "*Jehovah cannot intend to kill us, as He has accepted our sacrifice, and has shown us all this*" (the twofold miracle). "*And at this time He has not let us see such things as these.*" בָּעֵת, at the time in which we live, even if such things may possibly have taken place in the hoary antiquity.—Ver. 24. The promise of God was fulfilled. The boy whom the woman bare received the name of *Samson*. שִׁמְשׁוֹן (LXX., Σαμψών) does not mean sun-like, hero of the sun, from שֶׁמֶשׁ (the sun), but, as *Josephus* explains it (Ant. v. 8, 4), *ἰσχυρός*, the strong or daring one, from שִׁמְשׁוֹם, from the intensive form שִׁמֵּשׁ, from שָׁמַם, in its original sense to be strong or daring, not "to devastate." שָׁדַד is an analogous word: *lit.* to be powerful, then to act powerfully, to devastate. The boy grew under the blessing of God (see 1 Sam. ii. 21).—Ver. 25. When he had grown up, the Spirit of Jehovah began to thrust him in the camp of Dan. פָּעַם, to thrust, denoting the operation of the Spirit

of God within him, which took possession of him suddenly, and impelled him to put forth supernatural powers. *Mahaneh-Dan*, the camp of Dan, was the name given to the district in which the Danites who emigrated, according to chap. xviii. 12, from the inheritance of their tribe, had pitched their encampment *behind*, *i.e.* to the west of, *Kirjath-jearim*, or according to this verse, between Zorea and Eshtaol. The situation cannot be determined precisely, as the situation of Eshtaol itself has not been discovered yet (see at Josh. xv. 33). It was there that Samson lived with his parents, judging from chap. xvi. 31. The meaning of this verse, which forms the introduction to the following account of the acts of Samson, is simply that Samson was there seized by the Spirit of Jehovah, and impelled to commence the conflict with the Philistines.

Chap. xiv. SAMSON'S FIRST TRANSACTIONS WITH THE PHILISTINES.—Vers. 1–9. At Tibnath, the present *Tibne*, an hour's journey to the south-west of Sur'a (see at Josh. xv. 10), to which Samson had gone down from Zorea or Mahaneh-Dan, he saw a daughter of the Philistines who pleased him; and on his return he asked his parents to take her for him as a wife (לָקַח, to take, as in Ex. xxi. 9).—Vers. 3, 4. His parents expressed their astonishment at the choice, and asked him whether there was not a woman among the daughters of his brethren (*i.e.* the members of his own tribe), or among all his people, that he should want to fetch one from the Philistines, the uncircumcised. But Samson repeated his request, because the daughter of the Philistines pleased him. The aversion of his parents to the marriage was well founded, as such a marriage was not in accordance with the law. It is true that the only marriages expressly prohibited in Ex. xxxiv. 16 and Deut. vii. 3, 4, are marriages with Canaanitish women; but the reason assigned for this prohibition was equally applicable to marriages with daughters of the Philistines. In fact, the Philistines are reckoned among the Canaanites in Josh. xiii. 3 upon the very same ground. But Samson was acting under a higher impulse, whereas his parents did not know that it was from Jehovah, *i.e.* that Jehovah had so planned it; "*for Samson was seeking an opportunity on account of the Philistines*," *i.e.* an occasion to quarrel with them, because, as is afterwards added in the form of an explanatory circumstantial clause, the Philistines had dominion over Israel at that time. תֹּאָנָה, *ἅπ. λεγ.*, an opportunity (cf. תְּתָאֲנֶה, 2 Kings v. 7).—Vers. 5, 6.

When Samson went down with his parents to Timnath, a young lion came roaring towards him at the vineyards of that town. Then the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, so that he tore the lion in pieces as a kid is torn (*lit.* " like the tearing in pieces of the kid"), although he had nothing, *i.e.* no weapon, in his hand. David, when a shepherd, and the hero Benaiah, also slew lions (1 Sam. xvii. 34, 35; 2 Sam. xxiii. 20); and even at the present day Arabs sometimes kill lions with a staff (see *Winer*, Bibl. R. W. Art. Löwe). Samson's supernatural strength, the effect of the Spirit of Jehovah, which came upon him, was simply manifested in the fact that he tore the lion in pieces without any weapon whatever in his hand. But he said nothing about it to his parents, who were not eye-witnesses of the deed. This remark is introduced in connection with what follows.—Ver. 7. When he came to Timnath he talked with the girl, and she pleased him. He had only *seen* her before (ver. 1); but now that his parents had asked for her, he talked with her, and found the first impression that he had received of her fully confirmed.—Ver. 8. When some time had elapsed after the betrothal, he came again to fetch her (take her home, marry her), accompanied, as we learn from ver. 9, by his parents. On the way " *he turned aside* (from the road) *to see the carcase of the lion; and behold a swarm of bees was in the body of the lion, also honey.*" The word מַפֶּלֶת, which only occurs here, is derived from נָפַל, like πτῶμα from πίπτω, and is synonymous with נְבֵלָה, *cadaver*, and signifies not the mere skeleton, as bees would not form their hive in such a place, but the carcase of the lion, which had been thoroughly dried up by the heat of the sun, without passing into a state of putrefaction. "In the desert of Arabia the heat of a sultry season will often dry up all the moisture of men or camels that have fallen dead, within twenty-four hours of their decease, without their passing into a state of decomposition and putrefaction, so that they remain for a long time like mummies, without change and without stench" (*Rosenmüller*, Bibl. Althk. iv. 2, p. 424). In a carcase dried up in this way, a swarm of bees might form their hive, just as well as in the hollow trunks of trees, or clefts in the rock, or where wild bees are accustomed to form them, notwithstanding the fact that bees avoid both dead bodies and carrion (see *Bochart, Hieroz. ed. Ros.* iii. p. 355).—Ver. 9. Samson took it (the honey) in his hands, ate some of it as he went, and also gave some to his father and mother to eat, but did not tell them that he had got the honey out of the dead body of the lion; for in that case they would not only have refused to

eat it as being unclean, but would have been aware of the fact, which Samson afterwards took as the subject of the riddle that he proposed to the Philistines. רָדָה, to tread, to tread down; hence to get forcible possession of, not to break or to take out, neither of which meanings can be established. The combination of רָדָה and אֶל־כַּפָּיו is a pregnant construction, signifying to obtain possession of and take into the hands.

Vers. 10–20. *Samson's Wedding and Riddle.*—Ver. 10. When his father had come down to the girl (*sc.* to keep the wedding, not merely to make the necessary preparations for his marriage), Samson prepared for a feast there (in Timnath), according to the usual custom (for so used the young men to do).—Ver. 11. "*And when they saw him, they fetched thirty friends, and they were with him.*" The parents or relations of the bride are the subject of the first clause. They invited thirty of their friends in Timnath to the marriage feast, as "children of the bride-chamber" (Matt. ix. 15), since Samson had not brought any with him. The reading כִּרְאוֹתָם from רָאָה needs no alteration, though *Bertheau* would read כִּרְאֹתָם from יָרֵא, in accordance with the rendering of the LXX. (*Cod. Al.*) and of *Josephus*, *ἐν τῷ φοβεῖσθαι αὐτούς*. Fear of Samson would neither be in harmony with the facts themselves, nor with the words וַיִּהְיוּ אִתּוֹ, "*they were with him*," which it is felt to be necessary to paraphrase in the most arbitrary manner "they watched him."—Ver. 12. At the wedding feast Samson said to the guests, "*I will give you a riddle. If you show it to me during the seven days of the meal* (the wedding festival), *and guess it, I will give you thirty sedinim* (*σινδόνες*, *tunicæ*, *i.e.* clothes worn next to the skin) *and thirty changes of garments* (costly dresses, that were frequently changed: see at Gen. xlv. 22); *but if ye cannot show it to me, ye shall give me the same number of garments.*" The custom of proposing riddles at banquets by way of entertainment is also to be met with among the ancient Grecians. (For proofs from *Athenæus*, *Pollux*, *Gellius*, see *Bochart*, Hieroz. P. ii. l. ii. c. 12; and *K. O. Müller*, Dorier, ii. p. 392). As the guests consented to this proposal, Samson gave them the following riddle (ver. 14): "*Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.*" This riddle they could not show, *i.e.* solve, for three days. That is to say, they occupied themselves for three days in trying to find the solution; after that they let the matter rest until the appointed term was drawing near.—Ver. 15. On the seventh day they said to Samson's wife, "*Persuade thy husband to show us*

*the riddle*," *sc.* through thee, without his noticing it, "*lest we burn thee and thy father's house with fire. Have ye invited us to make us poor; is it not so?*" In this threat the barbarism and covetousness of the Philistines came openly to light. הֲלְיִרְשֵׁנוּ without *Metheg* in the יְ is the *inf. Kal* of יָרַשׁ, to make poor,—a meaning derived from inheriting, not the *Piel* of יָרַשׁ = רוּשׁ, to be poor. הֲלֹא, *nonne*, strengthens the interrogative clause, and has not the signification "here" = הֲלֹם. Samson's wife, however, wept over him, *i.e.* urged him with tears in her eyes, and said, "*Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not; thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people* (my countrymen), *and hast not shown it to me.*" חִדַּתָּה is from חוּד. Samson replied, that he had not even shown it to his father and mother, "*and shall I show it to thee?*"—Ver. 17. "*Thus his wife wept before him the seven days of the banquet.*" This statement is not at variance with that in ver. 15, to the effect that it was only on the seventh day that the Philistine young men urged her with threats to entice Samson to tell the riddle, but may be explained very simply in the following manner. The woman had already come to Samson every day with her entreaties from simple curiosity; but Samson resisted them until the seventh day, when she became more urgent than ever, in consequence of this threat on the part of the Philistines. And "*Samson showed it to her, because she lay sore upon him;*" whereupon she immediately betrayed it to her countrymen.—Ver. 18. Thus on the seventh day, before the sun went down (חֶרְסָה = חֶרֶס, chap. viii. 13; Job. ix. 7, with a toneless *ah*, a softening down of the feminine termination: see *Ewald*, § 173, *h.*), the men of the city (*i.e.* the thirty young men who had been invited) said to Samson, "What is sweeter than honey, and what stronger than a lion?" But Samson saw through the whole thing, and replied, "*If ye had not ploughed with my heifer, ye had not hit upon* (guessed) *my riddle*,"—a proverbial saying, the meaning of which is perfectly clear.—Ver. 19. Nevertheless he was obliged to keep his promise (ver. 12). Then the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him. He went down to Ashkelon, slew thirty men of them, *i.e.* of the Ashkelonites, took their clothes (חֲלִיצוֹת, *exuviæ*: see 2 Sam. ii. 21), and gave the changes of garments to those who had shown the riddle. This act is described as the operation of the Spirit of Jehovah which came upon Samson, because it showed to the Philistines the superior power of the servants of Jehovah. It was not carnal revenge that had impelled Samson to the deed. It was not till the deed itself was done that his anger

was kindled; and even then it was not against the Philistines, to whom he had been obliged to pay or give the thirty garments, but against his wife, who had betrayed his secret to her countrymen, so that he returned to his father's house, viz. without his wife.—Ver. 20. "*And Samson's wife was given to his friend, whom he had chosen as a friend.*" מֵרֵעַ is no doubt to be understood here in the sense of "the friend of the bridegroom" (John iii. 29), ὁ νυμφαγωγός (LXX.), the conductor of the bride,—namely, one of the thirty companions (ver. 10), whom Samson had entrusted with this office at the marriage festival. The faithlessness of the Philistines towards the Israelites was no doubt apparent here; for even if Samson went home enraged at the treacherous behaviour of his wife, without taking her with him, he did not intend to break the marriage tie, as chap. xv. 1, 2 clearly shows. So that instead of looking at the wrong by which Samson felt himself aggrieved, and trying to mitigate his wrath, the parents of the woman made the breach irreparable by giving their daughter as a wife to his companion.

Chap. xv. FURTHER ACTS OF SAMSON.—Vers. 1–8. *His revenge upon the Philistines.*—Ver. 1. Some time after, Samson visited his wife in the time of the wheat harvest with a kid,—a customary present at that time (Gen. xxxviii. 17),—and wished to go into the chamber (the women's apartment) to her; but her father would not allow him, and said, "*I thought thou hatedst her, and therefore gave her to thy friend* (chap. xiv. 20): *behold her younger sister is fairer than she; let her be thine in her stead.*"—Ver. 3. Enraged at this answer, Samson said to them (*i.e.* to her father and those around him), "*Now am I blameless before the Philistines, if I do evil to them.*" נָקִי with מִן, to be innocent away from a person, *i.e.* before him (see Num. xxxii. 22). Samson regarded the treatment which he had received from his father-in-law as but one effect of the disposition of the Philistines generally towards the Israelites, and therefore resolved to avenge the wrong which he had received from one member of the Philistines upon the whole nation, or at all events upon the whole of the city of Timnath.—Vers. 4, 5. He therefore went and caught three hundred *shualim*, *i.e.* jackals, animals which resemble foxes and are therefore frequently classed among the foxes even by the common Arabs of the present day (see *Niebuhr*, Beschr. v. Arab. p. 166). Their European name is derived from the Persian *schaghal*. These animals, which are still found in great quantities at Joppa, Gaza, and in Galilee, herd

together, and may easily be caught (see *Rosenmüller*, Bibl. Althk. iv. 2, pp. 155 sqq.). He then took torches, turned tail to tail, *i.e.* coupled the jackals together by their tails, putting a torch between the two tails, set the torches on fire, and made the animals run into the fields of standing corn belonging to the Philistines. Then he burned "*from the shocks of wheat to the standing grain and to the olive gardens*," *i.e.* the shocks of wheat as well as the standing corn and the olive plantations. כֶּרֶם זַיִת are joined together in the construct state.—Ver. 6. The Philistines found out at once, that Samson had done them this injury because his father-in-law, the Timnite, had taken away his wife and given her to his companion. They therefore avenged themselves by burning her and her father,—probably by burning his house down to the ground, with its occupants within it,—an act of barbarity and cruelty which fully justified Samson's war upon them.—Ver. 7. Samson therefore declared to them, "*If ye do such things, truly* (כִּי) *when I have avenged myself upon you, then will I cease*," *i.e.* I will not cease till I have taken vengeance upon you.—Ver. 8. "*Then he smote them hip and thigh* (*lit.* 'thigh upon hip;' עַל as in Gen. xxxii. 12), *a great slaughter*." שׁוֹק, thigh, strengthened by עַל־יֶרֶךְ, is a second accusative governed by the verb, and added to define the word אוֹתָם more minutely, in the sense of "on hip and thigh;" whilst the expression which follows, מַכָּה גְדוֹלָה, is added as an adverbial accusative to strengthen the verb וַיַּךְ. Smiting hip and thigh is a proverbial expression for a cruel, unsparing slaughter, like the German "cutting arm and leg in two," or the Arabic "war in thigh fashion" (see *Bertheau in loc.*). After smiting the Philistines, Samson went down and dwelt in the cleft of the rock *Etam*. There is a town of *Etam* mentioned in 2 Chron. xi. 6, between Bethlehem and Tekoah, which was fortified by Rehoboam, and stood in all probability to the south of Jerusalem, upon the mountains of Judah. But this *Etam*, which *Robinson* (Pal. ii. 168) supposes to be the village of *Urtas*, a place still inhabited, though lying in ruins, is not to be thought of here, as the Philistines did not go up to the mountains of Judah (ver. 9), as *Bertheau* imagines, but simply came forward and encamped in Judah. The *Etam* of this verse is mentioned in 1 Chron. iv. 32, along with Ain Rimmon and other Simeonitish towns, and is to be sought for on the border of the Negeb and of the mountains of Judah, in the neighbourhood of *Khuweilifeh* (see *V. de Velde*, Mem. p. 311). The expression "he went down" suits this place very well, but not the Etam on the

mountains of Judah, to which he would have had to go up, and not down, from Timnath.

Vers. 9–17. *Samson is delivered up to the Philistines, and smites them with the jaw-bone of an Ass.*—Ver. 9. The Philistines came ("went up," denoting the advance of an army: see at Josh. viii. 1) to avenge themselves for the defeat they had sustained from Samson; and having encamped in Judah, spread themselves out in *Lechi* (*Lehi*). *Lechi* (לֶחִי, in pause לֶחִי, *i.e.* a jaw), which is probably mentioned again in 2 Sam. xxiii. 11, and, according to ver. 17, received the name of *Ramath-lechi* from Samson himself, cannot be traced with any certainty, as the early church tradition respecting the place is utterly worthless. *Van de Velde* imagines that it is to be found in the flattened rocky hill *el Lechieh*, or *Lekieh*, upon which an ancient fortification has been discovered, in the middle of the road from *Tell Khewelfeh* to *Beersheba*, at the south-western approach of the mountains of Judah.—Vers. 10 sqq. When the Judæans learned what was the object of this invasion on the part of the Philistines, three thousand of them went down to the cleft in the rock Etam, to bind Samson and deliver him up to the Philistines. Instead of recognising in Samson a deliverer whom the Lord had raised up for them, and crowding round him that they might smite their oppressors with his help and drive them out of the land, the men of Judah were so degraded, that they cast this reproach at Samson: "*Knowest thou not that the Philistines rule over us? Wherefore hast thou done this* (the deed described in ver. 8)? *We have come down to bind thee, and deliver thee into the hand of the Philistines.*" Samson replied, "*Swear to me that ye will not fall upon me yourselves.*" פָּגַע with בְּ, to thrust at a person, fall upon him, including in this case, according to ver. 13, the intention of killing.—Ver. 13. When they promised him this, he let them bind him with two new cords and lead him up (into the camp of the Philistines) out of the rock (*i.e.* the cleft of the rock).—Ver. 14. But when he came to Lechi, and the Philistines shouted with joy as they came to meet him, the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him, "*and the cords on his arms became like tow that had been burnt with fire, and his fetters melted from his hands.*" The description rises up to a poetical parallelism, to depict the triumph which Samson celebrated over the Philistines in the power of the Spirit of Jehovah. —Ver. 15. As soon as he was relieved of his bands, he seized upon a fresh jaw-bone of an ass, which he found there, and smote therewith a thousand men. He himself commemorated this victory in a

short poetical strain (ver. 16): "*With the ass's jaw-bone a heap, two heaps; with the ass's jaw-bone I smote a thousand men.*" The form of the word חֲמֹר = חֲמוֹר is chosen on account of the resemblance to חֲמוֹר, and is found again at 1 Sam. xvi. 20. How Samson achieved this victory is not minutely described. But the words "a heap, two heaps," point to the conclusion that it did not take place in one encounter, but in several. The supernatural strength with which Samson rent asunder the fetters bound upon him, when the Philistines thought they had him safely in their power, filled them with fear and awe as before a superior being, so that they fled, and he pursued them, smiting one heap after another, as he overtook them, with an ass's jaw-bone which he found in the way. The number given, viz. a thousand, is of course a round number signifying a very great multitude, and has been adopted from the song into the historical account.—Ver. 17. When he had given utterance to his saying, he threw the jaw-bone away, and called the place *Ramath-lechi, i.e.* the jaw-bone height. This seems to indicate that the name *Lechi* in ver. 9 is used proleptically, and that the place first received its name from this deed of Samson.

Vers. 18–20. The pursuit of the Philistines, however, and the conflict with them, had exhausted Samson, so that he was very thirsty, and feared that he might die from exhaustion; for it was about the time of the wheat-harvest (ver. 1), and therefore hot summer weather. Then he called to the Lord, "*Thou hast through* (בְּיַד) *Thy servant given this great deliverance; and now I shall die for thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised!*" From this prayer we may see that Samson was fully conscious that he was fighting for the cause of the Lord. And the Lord helped him out of this trouble. God split the hollow place at Lechi, so that water came out of it, as at Horeb and Kadesh (Ex. xvii. 6, and Num. xx. 8, 11). The word מַכְתֵּשׁ, which is used in Prov. xxvii. 22 to signify a mortar, is explained by rabbinical expositors as denoting the socket of the teeth, or the hollow place in which the teeth are fixed, like the Greek ὀλμίσκος, *mortariolum*, according to *Pollux*, Onom. ii. c. 4, § 21. Accordingly many have understood the statement made here, as meaning that God caused a fountain to flow miraculously out of the socket of a tooth in the jaw-bone which Samson had thrown away, and thus provided for his thirst. This view is the one upon which Luther's rendering, "God split a tooth in the jaw, so that water came out," is founded, and it has been voluminously defended by *Bochart* (Hieroz. l. ii. c. 15). But the

expression אֲשֶׁר בְּלֶחִי, "the *maktesh* which is at *Lechi*," is opposed to this view, since the tooth-socket in the jaw-bone of the ass would be simply called מַכְתֵּשׁ הַלֶּחִי or מַכְתֵּשׁ בַּלֶּחִי; and so is also the remark that this fountain was still in existence in the historian's own time. And the article proves nothing to the contrary, as many proper names are written with it (see *Ewald*, § 277, *c.*). Consequently we must follow *Josephus* (Ant. v. 8), who takes הַמַּכְתֵּשׁ as the name given to the opening of the rock, which was cleft by God to let water flow out. "If a rocky precipice bore the name of jaw-bone (*lechi*) on account of its shape, it was a natural consequence of this figurative epithet, that the name *tooth-hollow* should be given to a hole or gap in the rock" (*Studer*). Moreover, the same name, *Maktesh*, occurs again in Zeph. i. 11, where it is applied to a locality in or near Jerusalem. The hollow place was split by *Elohim*, although it was to *Jehovah* that Samson had prayed, to indicate that the miracle was wrought by God as the Creator and Lord of nature. Samson drank, and his spirit returned, so that he revived again. Hence the fountain received the name of *En-hakkore*, "the crier's well which is at Lechi," unto this day. According to the accents, the last clause does not belong to בְּלֶחִי (in Lechi), but to וַיִּקְרָא וגו׳ (he called, etc.). It received the name given to it unto this day. This *implies*, of course, that the spring itself was in existence when our book was composed.—In ver. 20 the account of the judicial labours of Samson are brought to a close, with the remark that Samson judged Israel in the days of the Philistines, *i.e.* during their rule, for twenty years. What more is recorded of him in chap. xvi. relates to his fall and ruin; and although even in this he avenged himself upon the Philistines, he procured no further deliverance for Israel. It is impossible to draw any critical conclusions from the position in which this remark occurs, as to a plurality of sources for the history of Samson.

Chap. xvi. SAMSON'S FALL AND DEATH.—Samson's judicial labours reached their highest point when he achieved his great victory over the Philistines at Lechi. Just as his love to the daughter of a Philistine had furnished him with the occasion designed by God for the manifestation of his superiority to the uncircumcised enemies of Israel, so the degradation of that love into sensual lust supplied the occasion for his fall which is related in this chapter. "Samson, when strong and brave, strangled a lion; but he could not strangle his own love. He burst the fetters

of his foes, but not the cords of his own lusts. He burned up the crops of others, and lost the fruit of his own virtue when burning with the flame enkindled by a single woman." (*Ambros.* Apol. ii., *David.* c. iii.)

Vers. 1–3. *His heroic deed at Gaza.*—Samson went to Gaza in the full consciousness of his superiority in strength to the Philistines, and there went in unto a harlot whom he saw. For Gaza, see Josh. xiii. 3. בּוֹא אֶל is used in the same sense as in Gen. vi. 4 and xxxviii. 16. It is not stated in this instance, as in chap. xiv. 4, that it was of the Lord.—Ver. 2. When this was told to the Gazites, they surrounded him (the object to the verb is to be supplied from the following word לוֹ) and laid wait for him all night at the city gate, but they kept themselves quiet during the night, saying, "*Till the dawning* (אוֹר, *infin.*) *of the morning*," *sc.* we can wait, "*then will we kill him.*" For this construction, see 1 Sam. i. 22. The verb וַיֻּגַּד, "it was told" (according to the LXX. and *Chald.*: cf. Gen. xxii. 20), or וַיֹּאמְרוּ, "they said," is wanting before לֵעָזָתִים, and must have fallen out through a copyist's error. The verb הִתְחָרְשׁ has evidently the subordinate idea of giving themselves up to careless repose; for if the watchmen who were posted at the city gate had but watched in a regular manner, Samson could not have lifted out the closed gates and carried them away. But as they supposed that he would not leave the harlot before daybreak, they relied upon the fact that the gate was shut, and probably fell asleep.—Ver. 3. But at midnight Samson got up, and "laying hold of the folding wings of the city gate, as well as the two posts, tore them out of the ground with his herculean strength, together with the bar that fastened them, and carried them up to the top of the mountain which stands opposite to Hebron." עַל־פְּנֵי merely means in the direction towards, as in Gen. xviii. 16, and does not signify that the mountain was in the front of Hebron or in the immediate neighbourhood (see Deut. xxxii. 49, where Mount Nebo, which was on the other side of the Jordan, and at least four geographical miles from Jericho, is said to have been over against it, and the same expression is employed). The distance from Gaza to Hebron was about nine geographical miles. To the east of Gaza there is a range of hills which runs from north to south. The highest of them all is one which stands somewhat isolated, about half an hour to the south-east of the town, and is called *el Montar* from a wely which is found upon the top of it. From this hill there is a splendid prospect over the whole of the

surrounding country. Hebron itself is not visible from this hill, but the mountains of Hebron are. According to an ancient tradition, it was to the summit of this hill that Samson carried the city gates; and both *Robinson* (Pal. ii. 377) and *V. de Velde* regard this tradition as by no means improbable, although the people of Gaza are not acquainted with it. "The city gate of the Gaza of that time was probably not less than three-quarters of an hour from the hill *el Montar;* and to climb this peak with the heavy gates and their posts and bar upon his shoulders through the deep sand upon the road, was a feat which only a Samson could perform" (*V. de Velde*).

Vers. 4–21. *Samson and Delilah.*—Ver. 4. After this successful act, Samson gave himself up once more to his sensual lusts. He fell in love with a woman in the valley of *Sorek*, named *Delilah* (*i.e.* the weak or pining one), to whose snares he eventually succumbed. With reference to the valley of *Sorek*, *Eusebius* affirms in the *Onom.* (*s. v.* Σωρήχ), that there was a village called Βαρήχ (*l.* Καφὰρ σωρήχ according to *Jerome*) near Zorea, and ἐν ὁρίοις (*l.* βορείοις according to *Jerome*, who has *ad septentrionalem plagam*); and also (*s. v.* Σωρήκ) that this place was near to Eshtaol. Consequently the *Sorek* valley would have to be sought for somewhere in the neighbourhood of Samson's birthplace (chap. xiii. 1), and the dwelling-place of his family (ver. 31).—Ver. 5. The princes of the Philistines offered Delilah a considerable sum (they would give her one thousand and one hundred shekels of silver each, *i.e.* a thousand shekels or more: cf. chap. xvii. 2) if she would persuade Samson, and bring out from him "whereby his strength was great," and whereby they could overpower and bind him, לַעֲנֹתוֹ, to bend him, *i.e.* to oppress him. The Philistine princes thought that Samson's supernatural strength arose from something external, which he wore or carried about with him as an amulet. There was a certain truth at the foundation of this heathen superstition, inasmuch as this gift of divine grace was really bound up with the possession of a corporeal pledge, the loss of which was followed by the immediate loss of the gift of God (see at ver. 17).—Ver. 6. Allured by the reward in prospect, Delilah now sought to get from him the secret of his strength. But he deceived her three times by false statements. He first of all said to her (ver. 7), "*If they bound me with strings that have not been dried, I should be weak and like one of the men*" (*i.e.* like any other man). יֶתֶר signifies a sinew or string, *e.g.* a bow-string, Ps. xi. 2, and in the different dialects

either a bow-string or the string of a harp or guitar. As a distinction is made here between the יְתָרִים and the עֲבֹתִים in ver. 11, the strings intended here are those of catgut or animal sinew. The number *seven* is that of a divine act, answering to the divine power which Samson possessed.—Vers. 8, 9. When Delilah told this to the princes of the Philistines, they brought the seven strings required, and Delilah bound Samson with them. "*And the spy sat in the room* (לָהּ, *dat. com., lit.* 'to her,' *i.e.*) *to help her*," namely, without Samson knowing it, as Delilah had certainly not told him that she should betray the secret of his strength to the Philistines. He was there, no doubt, that he might be at hand and overpower the fettered giant as soon as it became apparent that his strength was gone. She then cried out to him, "*Philistines upon thee, Samson!*" And he snapped the strings as one would snap a cord of tow "when it smells fire," *i.e.* is held to the fire.—Vers. 10-12. The second deception: Samson had himself bound with new cords, which had not yet been used for any purpose, and these also he burst from his arms like a thread.—Vers. 13 and 14. The third deception: "*If thou weavest together the seven locks of my hair with the warp. And she drove it in with the plug.*" These words are difficult to explain, partly because several technical terms are used which have more than one meaning, and partly because the account itself is contracted, both Samson's advice and her fulfilment of it being only given in a partial form, so that the one has to be completed from the other. In ver. 19, the only other passage in which מַחְלְפוֹת occurs, it no doubt means the plaits into which Samson's long flowing hair was plaited. הַמַּסֶּכֶת only occurs here (vers. 13 and 14), and probably means the woven cloth, or rather what was still upon the loom, the warp of the cloth, *διάσμα* (LXX.). Accordingly the meaning of the verse would be this: If thou weavest the seven plaits of my hair along with the warp upon the loom. The commentators are all agreed that, according to these words, there must be something wanting in the account, though they are not of one opinion as to whether the binding of Samson is fully given here, and all that has to be supplied is the clause "*Then shall I be weak*," etc. (as in vers. 7 and 11), or whether the words וְתִתְקַע בַּיָּתֵד add another fact which was necessary to the completeness of the binding, and if so, how these words are to be understood. In *Bertheau's* opinion, the words "*and she thrust with the plug*" probably mean nothing more than that she made a noise to wake the sleeping Samson, because it is neither stated here

that she forced the plug into the wall or into the earth to fasten the plaits with (LXX., *Jerome*), nor that her thrusting with the plug contributed in any way to the further fastening of the hair. These arguments are sound no doubt, but they do not prove what is intended. When it is stated in ver. 14*b*, that "he tore out the weaver's plug and the cloth," it is certainly evident that the plug served to fasten the hair to the cloth or to the loom. Moreover, not only would any knocking with the plug to waken Samson with the noise have been altogether superfluous, as the loud cry, "Philistines upon thee, Samson," would be amply sufficient for this; but it is extremely improbable that a fact with so little bearing upon the main facts would be introduced here at all. We come therefore to the same conclusion as the majority of commentators, viz. that the words in question are to be understood as referring to something that was done to fasten Samson still more securely. הַיְתַד הָאֹרֶג = הַיְתַד (ver. 14) does not mean the roller or weaver's beam, to which the threads of the warp were fastened, and round which the cloth was rolled when finished, as *Bertheau* supposes, for this is called מְנוֹר אֹרְגִים in 1 Sam. xvii. 7; nor the σπάθη of the Greeks, a flat piece of wood like a knife, which was used in the upright loom for the same purpose as our comb or press, viz. to press the weft together, and so increase the substance of the cloth (*Braun, de vestitu Sacerd.* p. 253); but the comb or press itself which was fastened to the loom, so that it could only be torn out by force. To complete the account, therefore, we must supply between vers. 13 and 14, "And if thou fastenest it (the woven cloth) with the plug (the weaver's comb), I shall be weak like one of the other men; and she wove the seven plaits of his hair into the warp of the loom." Then follows in ver. 14, "*and fastened the cloth with the weaver's comb.*" There is no need, however, to assume that what has to be supplied fell out in copying. We have simply an ellipsis, such as we often meet with. When Samson was wakened out of his sleep by the cry of "Philistines upon thee," he tore out the weaver's comb and the warp (*sc.*) from the loom, with his plaits of hair that had been woven in. The reference to his sleeping warrants the assumption that Delilah had also performed the other acts of binding while he was asleep. We must not understand the account, however, as implying that the three acts of binding followed close upon one another on the very same day. Several days may very probably have elapsed between them. In this third deception Samson had

already gone so far in his presumptuous trifling with the divine gift entrusted to him, as to suffer the hair of his head to be meddled with, though it was sanctified to the Lord. "It would seem as though this act of sin ought to have brought him to reflection. But as that was not the case, there remained but one short step more to bring him to thorough treachery towards the Lord" (*O. v. Gerlach*).

This last step was very speedily to follow.—Ver. 15. After this triple deception, Delilah said to him, "*How canst thou say, I love thee, as thine heart is not with me*" (*i.e.* not devoted to me)?—Ver. 16. With such words as these she plagued him every day, so that his soul became impatient even to death (see chap. x. 16). The ἅπ. λεγ. אָלַץ signifies in Aramæan, to press or plague. The form is *Piel*, though without the reduplication of the ל and *Chateph-patach* under (see *Ewald*, § 90, *b.*).—Ver. 17. "*And he showed her all his heart,*" *i.e.* he opened his mind thoroughly to her, and told her that no razor had come upon his head, because he was a Nazarite from his mother's womb (cf. chap. xiii. 5, 7). "*If I should be shaven, my strength would depart from me, and I should be weak like all other men.*"—Ver. 18. When Delilah saw (*i.e.* perceived, namely from his words and his whole behaviour while making this communication) that he had betrayed the secret of his strength, she had the princes of the Philistines called: "*Come up this time, . . . for he had revealed to her all his heart.*" This last clause is not to be understood as having been spoken by Delilah to the princes themselves, as it is by the Masorites and most of the commentators, in which case לָהּ would have to be altered into לִי; but it contains a remark of the writer, introduced as an explanation of the circumstance that Delilah sent for the princes of the Philistines now that she was sure of her purpose. This view is confirmed by the word וְעָלוּ (came up) which follows, since the use of the perfect instead of the imperfect with *vav consec.* can only be explained on the supposition that the previous clause is a parenthetical one, which interrupts the course of the narrative, and to which the account of the further progress of the affair could not be attached by the historical tense (וַיַּעֲלוּ).[1] The princes of the Philistines came up to Delilah on the receipt of this

[1] The *Keri* reading לִי arose simply from a misunderstanding, although it is found in many MSS. and early editions, and is without any critical worth. The Masorites overlooked the fact that the main point is all that is related of the message of Delilah to the princes of the Philistines, namely that they were to

communication, bringing the money, the promised reward of her treachery (ver. 5), in their hands.—Ver. 19. "*Then she made him sleep upon her knees, and called to the man,*" possibly the man lying in wait (vers. 9 and 12), that she might not be alone with Samson when cutting off his hair; and she cut off the seven plaits of his hair, and began to afflict him, as his strength departed from him now.—Ver. 20. She then cried out, "*Philistines upon thee, Samson!*" And he awaked out of his sleep, and thought ("*said,*" *i.e.* to himself), "*I will go away as time upon time* (this as at other times), *and shake myself loose,*" *sc.* from the fetters or from the hands of the Philistines; "*but he knew not that Jehovah had departed from him.*" These last words are very important to observe in order to form a correct idea of the affair. Samson had said to Delilah, "If my hair were cut off, *my strength* would depart from me" (ver. 17). The historian observes, on the other hand, that "*Jehovah* had departed from him." The superhuman strength of Samson did not reside in his hair as hair, but in the fact that Jehovah was with or near him. But Jehovah was with him so long as he maintained his condition as a Nazarite. As soon as he broke away from this by sacrificing the hair which he wore in honour of the Lord, Jehovah departed from him, and with Jehovah went his strength.[1] —Ver. 21. The Philistines then seized him, put out his eyes, and led him to Gaza fettered with double brass chains. The chains are probably called *nechushtaim* (double brass) because both hands or both feet were fettered with them. King Zedekiah, when taken prisoner by the Chaldeans, was treated in the same manner (2 Kings xxv. 7). There Samson was obliged to turn the mill in the prison, and grind corn (the participle טוֹחֵן expresses the continuance of the action). Grinding a handmill was the hardest and lowest

come this time, and that the rest can easily be supplied from the context. *Studer* admits how little וְעָלָי suits that view of the clause which the *Keri* reading לִי requires, and calls it "syntactically impossible." He proposes, however, to read וַיַּעֲלִי, without reflecting that this reading is also nothing more than a change which is rendered necessary by the alteration of לָהּ into לִי, and has no critical value.

[1] "Samson was strong because he was dedicated to God, as long as he preserved the signs of his dedication. But as soon as he lost those signs, he fell into the utmost weakness in consequence. The whole of Samson's misfortune came upon him, therefore, because he attributed to himself some portion of what God did through him. God permitted him to lose his strength, that he might learn by experience how utterly powerless he was without the help of God. We have no better teachers than our own infirmities."—*Berleb. Bible.*

kind of slave labour (compare Ex. xi. 5 with xii. 29); and both Greeks and Romans sentenced their slaves to this as a punishment (see *Od.* xx. 105 sqq., vii. 103–4; *Terent.* Phorm. ii. 1, 19, Andr. i. 2, 29), and it is still performed by female slaves in the East (see *Chardin* in *Harmar's* Beob. üb. d. Orient. iii. 64).

Vers. 22–31. *Samson's Misery, and his Triumph in Death.*—Ver. 22. The hair of his head began to grow, as he was shaven. In the word בַּאֲשֶׁר, *as* (from the time when he was shaven), there is an indication that Samson only remained in his ignominious captivity till his hair began to grow again, *i.e.* visibly to grow. What follows agrees with this.—Vers. 23, 24. The captivity of this dreaded hero was regarded by the Philistines as a great victory, which their princes resolved to celebrate with a great and joyous sacrificial festival in honour of their god *Dagon*, to whom they ascribed this victory. "*A great sacrifice*," consisting in the offering up of a large number of slain sacrifices. "*And for joy*," viz. to give expression to their joy, *i.e.* for a joyous festival. *Dagon*, one of the principal deities of the Philistines, was worshipped at Gaza and Ashdod (1 Sam. v. 2 sqq., and 1 Macc. x. 83), and, according to Jerome on Isa. xlvi. 1, in the rest of the Philistine towns as well. It was a fish-deity (דָּגוֹן, from דָּג, a fish), and in shape resembled the body of a fish with the head and hands of a man (1 Sam. v. 4). It was a male deity, the corresponding female deity being *Atargatis* (2 Macc. xii. 26) or *Derceto*, and was a symbol of water, and of all the vivifying forces of nature which produce their effects through the medium of water, like the Babylonian Ὡδάκων, one of the four *Oannes*, and the Indian *Vishnu* (see *Movers*, Phöniz. i. pp. 143 sqq., 590 sqq., and *J. G. Müller* in *Herzog's* Cycl.).—Ver. 24. All the people took part in this festival, and sang songs of praise to the god who had given the enemy, who had laid waste their fields and slain many of their countrymen, into their hands.—Vers. 25 sqq. When their hearts were merry (יְטוֹב, *inf.* of יָטַב), they had Samson fetched out of the prison, that he might make sport before them, and "put him between the pillars" of the house or temple in which the triumphal feast was held. Then he said to the attendant who held his hand, "*Let me loose, and let me touch the pillars upon which the house is built, that I may lean upon it.*" הֲיִמִּישֵׁנִי is the imperative *Hiphil* of the radical verb יָמַשׁ, which only occurs here; and the *Keri* substitutes the ordinary form הָמִישׁ from מוּשׁ. "*But the house*," adds the historian by way of preparation for what follows, "*was filled with men and women: all the princes*

*of the Philistines also were there; and upon the roof were about three thousand men and women, who feasted their eyes with Samson's sports*" (רְאוֹת with בְּ, used to denote the gratification of looking).—Ver. 28. Then Samson prayed to Jehovah, "*Lord Jehovah, remember me, and only this time make me strong, O God, that I may avenge myself* (with) *the revenge of one of my two eyes upon the Philistines*," *i.e.* may take vengeance upon them for the loss of only one of my two eyes (מִשְּׁתַּי, without *Dagesh lene* in the ת: see *Ewald*, § 267, *b.*),—a sentence which shows how painfully he felt the loss of his two eyes, "a loss the severity of which even the terrible vengeance which he was meditating could never outweigh" (*Bertheau*).—Vers. 29, 30. After he had prayed to the Lord for strength for this last great deed, he embraced the two middle pillars upon which the building was erected, leant upon them, one with his right hand, the other with the left (viz. embracing them with his hands, as these words also belong to וַיִּלָּפֵת), and said, "*Let my soul die with the Philistines.*" He then bent (the two pillars) with force, and the house fell upon the princes and all the people who were within. So far as the fact itself is concerned, there is no ground for questioning the possibility of Samson's bringing down the whole building with so many men inside by pulling down two middle columns, as we have no accurate acquaintance with the style of its architecture. In all probability we have to picture this temple of Dagon as resembling the modern Turkish kiosks, namely as consisting of a "spacious hall, the roof of which rested in front upon four columns, two of them standing at the ends, and two close together in the centre. Under this hall the leading men of the Philistines celebrated a sacrificial meal, whilst the people were assembled above upon the top of the roof, which was surrounded by a balustrade" (*Faber*, Archäol. der Hebr. p. 444, cf. pp. 436–7; and *Shaw*, Reisen, p. 190). The ancients enter very fully into the discussion of the question whether Samson committed suicide or not, though without arriving at any satisfactory conclusion. *O. v. Gerlach*, however, has given the true answer. "Samson's deed," he says, "was not suicide, but the act of a hero, who sees that it is necessary for him to plunge into the midst of his enemies with the inevitable certainty of death, in order to effect the deliverance of his people and decide the victory which he has still to achieve. Samson would be all the more certain that this was the will of the Lord, when he considered that even if he should deliver himself in any other way out of the hands of the Philistines, he would always carry

about with him the mark of his shame in the blindness of his eyes,—a mark of his unfaithfulness as the servant of God quite as much as of the double triumph of his foes, who had gained a spiritual as well as a corporeal victory over him." Such a triumph as this the God of Israel could not permit His enemies and their idols to gain. The Lord must prove to them, even through Samson's death, that the shame of his sin was taken from him, and that the Philistines had no cause to triumph over him. Thus Samson gained the greatest victory over his foes in the moment of his own death. The terror of the Philistines when living, he became a destroyer of the temple of their idol when he died. Through this last act of his he vindicated the honour of Jehovah the God of Israel, against Dagon the idol of the Philistines. "*The dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life.*"—Ver. 31. This terrible blow necessarily made a powerful impression upon the Philistines, not only plunging them into deep mourning at the death of their princes and so many of their countrymen, and the destruction of the temple of Dagon, but filling them with fear and terror at the omnipotence of the God of the Israelites. Under these circumstances it is conceivable enough that the brethren and relatives of Samson were able to come to Gaza, and fetch away the body of the fallen hero, to bury it in his father's grave between Zorea and Eshtaol (see chap. xiii. 25).—In conclusion, it is once more very appropriately observed that Samson had judged Israel twenty years (cf. chap. xv. 20).

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## III.—IMAGE-WORSHIP OF MICAH AND THE DANITES; INFAMOUS CONDUCT OF THE INHABITANTS OF GIBEAH; VENGEANCE TAKEN UPON THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN.

### CHAP. XVII.–XXI.

The death of Samson closes the body of the book of Judges, which sets forth the history of the people of Israel under the judges in a continuous and connected form. The two accounts, which follow in chap. xvii.–xxi., of the facts mentioned in the heading are attached to the book of Judges in the form of *appendices*, as the facts in question not only belonged to the times of the judges, and in fact to the very commencement of those times (see p. 238), but furnished valuable materials for forming a correct idea of the actual

character of this portion of the Israelitish history. The *first* appendix (chap. xvii. xviii.)—viz. the account of the introduction of image-worship, or of the worship of Jehovah under the form of a molten image, by the Ephraimite Micah, and of the seizure of this image by the Danites, who emigrated from their own territory when upon their march northwards, and the removal of it to the city of *Laish-Dan*, which was conquered by them—shows us how shortly after the death of Joshua the inclination to an idolatrous worship of Jehovah manifested itself in the nation, and how this worship, which continued for a long time in the north of the land, was mixed up from the very beginning with sin and unrighteousness. The *second* (chap. xix.–xxi.)—viz. the account of the infamous act which the inhabitants of Gibeah attempted to commit upon the Levite who stayed there for the night, and which they actually did perform upon his concubine, together with its consequences, viz. the war of vengeance upon the tribe of Benjamin, which protected the criminals—proves, on the one hand, what deep roots the moral corruptions of the Canaanites had struck among the Israelites at a very early period, and, on the other hand, how even at that time the congregation of Israel as a whole had kept itself free and pure, and, mindful of its calling to be the holy nation of God, had endeavoured with all its power to root out the corruption that had already forced its way into the midst of it.

These two occurrences have no actual connection with one another, but they are both of them narrated in a very elaborate and circumstantial manner; and in both of them we not only find Israel still without a king (chap. xvii. 6, xviii. 1, and xix. 1, xxi. 25), and the will of God sought by a priest or by the high priest himself (chap. xviii. 5, 6, xx. 18, 23, 27), but the same style of narrative is adopted as a whole, particularly the custom of throwing light upon the historical course of events by the introduction of circumstantial clauses, from which we may draw the conclusion that they were written by the same author. On the other hand, they do not contain any such characteristic marks as could furnish a certain basis for well-founded conjectures concerning the author, or raise *Bertheau's* conjecture, that he was the same person as the author of chap. i. 1–ii. 5, into a probability. For the frequent use of the perfect with ו (compare chap. xx. 17, 33, 37, 38, 40, 41, 48, xxi. 1, 15, with chap. i. 8, 16, 21, 25, etc.) can be fully explained from the contents themselves; and the notion that the perfect is used here more frequently for the historical

imperfect with *vav consec.* rests upon a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of the passages in question. The other and not very numerous expressions, which are common to chap. xvii.–xxi. and chap. i., are not sufficiently characteristic to supply the proof required, as they are also met with elsewhere: see, for example, שִׁלַּח בְּאֵשׁ (chap. i. 8, xx. 48), which not only occurs again in 2 Kings viii. 12 and Ps. lxxiv. 7, but does not even occur in both the appendices, שָׂרַף בָּאֵשׁ being used instead in chap. xviii. 27. So much, however, may unquestionably be gathered from the exactness and circumstantiality of the history, viz. that the first recorder of these events, whose account was the source employed by the author of our book, cannot have lived at a time very remote from the occurrences themselves. On the other hand, there are not sufficient grounds for the conjecture that these appendices were not attached to the book of the Judges till a later age. For it can neither be maintained that the object of the first appendix was to show how the image-worship which Jeroboam set up in his kingdom at Bethel and Dan had a most pernicious origin, and sprang from the image-worship of the Ephraimite Micah, which the Danites had established at Laish, nor that the object of the second appendix was to prove that the origin of the pre-Davidic kingdom (of Saul) was sinful and untheocratic, *i.e.* opposed to the spirit and nature of the kingdom of God, as *Auberlen* affirms (Theol. Stud. u. Kr. 1860). The identity of the golden calf set up by Jeroboam at Dan with the image of Jehovah that was stolen by the Danites from Micah the Ephraimite and set up in Laish-Dan, is precluded by the statement in chap. xviii. 31 respecting the length of time that this image-worship continued in Dan (see the commentary on the passage itself). At the most, therefore, we can only maintain, with *O. v. Gerlach*, that "both (appendices) set forth, according to the intention of the author, the misery which arose during the wild unsettled period of the judges from the want of a governing, regal authority." This is hinted at in the remark, which occurs in both appendices, that at that time there was no king in Israel, and every one did what was right in his own eyes (chap. xvii. 6, xxi. 25). This remark, on the other hand, altogether excludes the time of the falling away of the ten tribes, and the decline of the later kingdom, and is irreconcilable with the assumption that these appendices were not added to the book of the Judges till after the division of the kingdom, or not till the time of the Assyrian or Babylonian captivity.

## IMAGE-WORSHIP OF MICAH THE EPHRAIMITE, AND ITS REMOVAL TO LAISH-DAN.—CHAP. XVII. XVIII.

Chap. xvii. MICAH'S IMAGE-WORSHIP.—The account of the image-worship which Micah established in his house upon the mountains of Ephraim is given in a very brief and condensed form, because it was simply intended as an introduction to the account of the establishment of this image-worship in Laish-Dan in northern Palestine. Consequently only such points are for the most part given, as exhibit in the clearest light the sinful origin and unlawful character of this worship.

Vers. 1–10. A man of the mountains of Ephraim named Micah (מִיכָיְהוּ, vers. 1, 4, then contracted into מִיכָה, vers. 5, 8, etc.), who set up this worship for himself, and "respecting whom the Scriptures do not think it worth while to add the name of his father, or to mention the family from which he sprang" (*Berleb. Bible*), had stolen 1100 shekels of silver (about £135) from his mother. This is very apparent from the words which he spoke to his mother (ver. 2): "*The thousand and hundred shekels of silver which were taken from thee* (the singular לָקַח refers to the silver), *about which thou cursedst and spakest of also in mine ears* (*i.e.* didst so utter the curse that among others I also heard it), *behold, this silver is with me; I have taken it.*" אָלָה, to swear, used to denote a malediction or curse (cf. קוֹל אָלָה, Lev. v. 1). He seems to have been impelled to make this confession by the fear of his mother's curse. But his mother praised him for it,—"*Blessed be my son of Jehovah*,"—partly because she saw in it a proof that there still existed a germ of the fear of God, but in all probability chiefly because she was about to dedicate the silver to Jehovah; for, when her son had given it back to her, she said (ver. 3), "*I have sanctified the silver to the Lord from my hand for my son, to make an image and molten work.*" The perfect הִקְדַּשְׁתִּי is not to be taken in the sense of the pluperfect, "I had sanctified it," but is expressive of an act just performed: I have sanctified it, I declare herewith that I do sanctify it. "*And now I give it back to thee*," namely, to appropriate to thy house of God.—Ver. 4. Hereupon—namely, when her son had given her back the silver ("he restored the silver unto his mother" is only a repetition of ver. 3*a*, introduced as a link with which to connect the appropriation of the silver)—the mother took 200 shekels and gave them to the goldsmith, who made an image and molten work of them, which were henceforth in Micah's house. The 200 shekels were

not quite the fifth part of the whole. What she did with the rest is not stated; but from the fact that she dedicated the silver generally, *i.e.* the whole amount, to Jehovah, according to ver. 3, we may infer that she applied the remainder to the maintenance of the image-worship.[1] *Pesel* and *massecah* (image and molten work) are joined together, as in Deut. xxvii. 15. The difference between the two words in this instance is very difficult to determine. *Pesel* signifies an idolatrous image, whether made of wood or metal. *Massecah*, on the other hand, signifies a cast, something poured; and when used in the singular, is almost exclusively restricted to the calf cast by Aaron or Jeroboam. It is generally connected with עֵגֶל, but it is used in the same sense without this definition (*e.g.* Deut. ix. 12). This makes the conjecture a very natural one, that the two words together might simply denote a likeness of Jehovah, and, judging from the occurrence at Sinai, a representation of Jehovah in the form of a molten calf. But there is one obstacle in the way of such a conjecture, namely, that in chap. xviii. 17, 18, *massecah* is separated from *pesel*, so as necessarily to suggest the idea of two distinct objects. But as we can hardly suppose that Micah's mother had two images of Jehovah made, and that Micah had both of them set up in his house of God, no other explanation seems possible than that the *massecah* was something belonging to the *pesel*, or image of Jehovah, but yet distinct from it,—in other words, that it was the pedestal upon which it stood. The *pesel* was at any rate the principal thing, as we may clearly infer from the fact that it is placed in the front rank among the four objects of Micah's sanctuary, which the Danites took with them (chap. xviii. 17, 18), and that in chap. xviii. 30, 31, the *pesel* alone is mentioned in connection with the setting up of the image-worship in Dan. Moreover, there can hardly be any doubt that *pesel*, as a representation of Jehovah, was an image of a bull, like the golden calf which Aaron had made at Sinai (Ex. xxxii. 4), and the golden calves which Jeroboam set up in the kingdom of Israel, and one of which was set up in Dan (1 Kings xii. 29).—Ver. 5. His mother did this, because

[1] There is no foundation for *Bertheau's* opinion, that the 200 shekels were no part of the 1100, but the trespass-money paid by the son when he gave his mother back the money that he had purloined, since, according to Lev. v. 24, when a thief restored to the owner any stolen property, he was to add the fifth of its value. There is no ground for applying this law to the case before us, simply because the taking of the money by the son is not even described as a theft, whilst the mother really praises her son for his open confession.

her son Micah had a house of God, and had had an ephod and teraphim made for himself, and one of his sons consecrated to officiate there as a priest. הָאִישׁ מִיכָה (the man Micah) is therefore placed at the head absolutely, and is connected with what follows by לוֹ: "*As for the man Micah, there was to him* (he had) *a house of God.*" The whole verse is a circumstantial clause explanatory of what precedes, and the following verbs וַיַּעַשׂ, וַיְמַלֵּא, and וַיְהִי, are simply a continuation of the first clause, and therefore to be rendered as pluperfects. Micah's *beth Elohim* (house of God) was a domestic temple belonging to Micah's house, according to chap. xviii. 15–18. מִלֵּא אֶת־יָד, to fill the hand, *i.e.* to invest with the priesthood, to institute as priest (see at Lev. vii. 37). The *ephod* was an imitation of the high priest's shoulder-dress (see at chap. viii. 27). The *teraphim* were images of household gods, penates, who were worshipped as the givers of earthly prosperity, and as oracles (see at Gen. xxxi. 19).—In ver. 6 it is observed, in explanation of this unlawful conduct, that at that time there was no king in Israel, and every one did what was right in his own eyes.

Vers. 7–13. *Appointment of a Levite as Priest.*—Vers. 7 sqq. In the absence of a Levitical priest, Micah had first of all appointed one of his sons as priest at his sanctuary. He afterwards found a Levite for this service. A young man from Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who, being a Levite, stayed (גָּר) there (in Bethlehem) as a stranger, left this town to sojourn "*at the place which he should find,*" *sc.* as a place that would afford him shelter and support, and came up to the mountains of Ephraim to Micah's house, "making his journey," *i.e.* upon his journey. (On the use of the *inf. constr.* with ל in the sense of the Latin gerund in *do*, see *Ewald*, § 280, *d.*) Bethlehem was not a Levitical town. The young Levite from Bethlehem was neither born there nor made a citizen of the place, but simply "sojourned there," *i.e.* dwelt there temporarily as a stranger. The further statement as to his descent (*mishpachath Judah*) is not to be understood as signifying that he was a descendant of some family in the tribe of Judah, but simply that he belonged to the Levites who dwelt in the tribe of Judah, and were reckoned in all civil matters as belonging to that tribe. On the division of the land, it is true that it was only to the priests that dwelling-places were allotted in the inheritance of this tribe (Josh. xxi. 9–19), whilst the rest of the Levites, even the non-priestly members of the family of Kohath, received their dwelling-places among the other tribes (Josh. xxi. 20 sqq.). At the same

time, as many of the towns which were allotted to the different tribes remained for a long time in the possession of the Canaanites, and the Israelites did not enter at once into the full and undisputed possession of their inheritance, it might easily so happen that different towns which were allotted to the Levites remained in possession of the Canaanites, and consequently that the Levites were compelled to seek a settlement in other places. It might also happen that individuals among the Levites themselves, who were disinclined to perform the service assigned them by the law, would remove from the Levitical towns and seek some other occupation elsewhere (see also at chap. xviii. 30).[1]—Ver. 10. Micah made this proposal to the Levite: "*Dwell with me, and become my father and priest; I will give thee ten shekels of silver yearly, and fitting out with clothes and maintenance.*" אָב, *father*, is an honourable title given to a priest as a paternal friend and spiritual adviser, and is also used with reference to prophets in 2 Kings vi. 21 and xiii. 14, and applied to Joseph in Gen. xlv. 8. לְיָמִים, *for the days, sc.* for which a person was engaged, *i.e.* for the year (cf. 1 Sam. xxvii. 7, and Lev. xxv. 29): "*And the Levite went,*" *i.e.* went to Micah's house. This meaning is evident from the context. The repetition of the subject, "the Levite," precludes our connecting it with the following verb וַיּוֹאֶל.—In vers. 11–13 the result is summed up. The Levite resolved (see at Deut. i. 5) to dwell with Micah, who treated him as one of his sons, and entrusted him with the priesthood at his house of God. And Micah rejoiced that he had got a Levite as priest, and said, "*Now I know that Jehovah will prosper me.*" This belief, or, to speak more correctly, superstition, for which Micah was very speedily to atone, proves that at that time the tribe of Levi held the position assigned it in the law of Moses; that is to say, that it was regarded as the tribe elected by God for the performance of divine worship.

## Chap. xviii. The Image-worship removed to Laish-Dan.

[1] There is no reason, therefore, for pronouncing the words מִמִּשְׁפַּחַת יְהוּדָה (of the family of Judah) a gloss, and erasing them from the text, as *Houbigant* proposes. The omission of them from the *Cod. Vat.* of the LXX., and from the Syriac, is not enough to warrant this, as they occur in the *Cod. Al.* of the LXX., and their absence from the authorities mentioned may easily be accounted for from the difficulty which was felt in explaining their meaning. On the other hand, it is impossible to imagine any reason for the interpolation of such a gloss into the text.

—Vers. 1–10. *Spies sent out by the tribe of Dan*, to seek for a place suitable for a settlement, and their success.—Ver. 1. This took place at a time when Israel had no king, and the tribe of the Danites sought an inheritance for themselves to dwell in, because until that day no such portion had fallen to them among the tribes as an inheritance. To the expression לֹא נָפְלָה (had not fallen) we must supply נַחֲלָה as the subject from the previous clause; and בְּנַחֲלָה signifies in the character of a *nachalah*, *i.e.* of a possession that could be transmitted as hereditary property from father to son. נָפַל, to fall, is used with reference to the falling of the lot (*vid.* Num. xxxiv. 2, Josh. xiii. 6, etc.). The general statement, that as yet no inheritance had fallen to the tribe of Dan by lot, has its limitation in the context. As the Danites, according to ver. 2, sent out five men from Zorea and Eshtaol, and, according to ver. 11, six hundred men equipped for fight went out to Laish, which the spies had discovered to be a place well fitted for a settlement, and had settled there, it is very evident from this that the Danites were not absolutely without an inheritance, but that hitherto they had not received one sufficient for their wants. The emigrants themselves were already settled in Zorea and Eshtaol, two of the towns that had fallen to the tribe of Dan by lot (Josh. xix. 41). Moreover, the six hundred equipped Danites, who went out of these towns, were only a very small part of the tribe of Danites, which numbered 64,400 males of twenty years old and upwards at the last census (Num. xxvi. 43). For a tribe of this size the land assigned by Joshua to the tribe of Dan, with all the towns that it contained, was amply sufficient. But from chap. i. 34 we learn that the Amorites forced the Danites into the mountains, and would not allow them to come down into the plain. Consequently they were confined to a few towns situated upon the sides or tops of the mountains, which did not supply all the room they required. Feeling themselves too weak to force back the Canaanites and exterminate them, one portion of the Danites preferred to seek an inheritance for themselves somewhere else in the land. This enterprise and emigration are described in vers. 2 sqq. The time cannot be determined with perfect certainty, as all that can be clearly inferred from ver. 12, as compared with chap. xiii. 25, is, that it took place some time before the days of Samson. Many expositors have therefore assigned it to the period immediately following the defeat of Jabin by Barak (chap. iv. 24), because it was not till after the overthrow of this powerful king of the Canaanites that conquests were possible

in the north of Canaan, and the tribe of Dan at that time still remained in ships (chap. v. 17), so that it had not yet left the territory assigned it by the sea-shore (Josh. xix.). But these arguments have neither of them any force; for there is nothing surprising in the fact that Danites should still be found by the sea-shore in the time of Deborah, even if Danite families from Zorea and Eshtaol had settled in Laish long before, seeing that these emigrants formed but a small fraction of the whole tribe, and the rest remained in the possessions assigned them by Joshua. Moreover, the strengthening of the force of the Canaanites, and the extension of their dominion in the north, did not take place till 150 years after Joshua, in the days of Jabin; so that long before Jabin the town of Laish may have been conquered by the Danites, and taken possession of by them. In all probability this took place shortly after the death of Joshua, as we may infer from ver. 30 (see the exposition of this verse).—Ver. 2. To spy out and explore the land for the object mentioned, the Danites sent out five brave men "*out of their* (the Danites') *ends*," *i.e.* from their whole body (*vid.* 1 Kings xii. 31, xiii. 33, and the commentary on Gen. xix. 4). They came up to the mountains of Ephraim, and as far as Micah's house, where they passed the night.—Vers. 3–6. When they were at Micah's house and recognised the voice of the young Levite, *i.e.* heard his voice, and perceived from his dialect that he was not a native of these mountains, they turned aside there, *sc.* from the road into the house, near to which they rested, and asked him, "*Who brought thee hither, and what doest thou at this place? what hast thou to do here?*" When he told them his history ("thus and thus," *lit.* according to this and that; cf. 2 Sam. xi. 25, 1 Kings xiv. 5), they said to him, "*Ask God, we pray thee, that we may learn whether our way will be prosperous.*" שְׁאַל בֵּאלֹהִים, used for asking the will of God, as in chap. i. 1, except that here the inquiry was made through the medium of the imitation of the ephod and the worship of an image. And he said to them, *sc.* after making inquiry of the divine oracle, "*Go in peace; straight before Jehovah is your way*," *i.e.* it is known and well-pleasing to Him (*vid.* Prov. v. 21, Jer. xvii. 16).—Ver. 7. Thus the five men proceeded to *Laish*, which is called *Leshem* in Josh. xix. 47, and was named *Dan* after the conquest by the Danites,—a place on the central source of the Jordan, the present *Tell el Kadi* (see at Josh. xix. 47),—and saw the people of the town dwelling securely after the manner of the Sidonians, who lived by trade and commerce, and did not go out to war. יוֹשֶׁבֶת is

the predicate to אֶת־הָעָם, and the feminine is to be explained from the fact that the writer had the population before his mind (see *Ewald*, § 174, *b.*); and the use of the masculine in the following words, שֹׁקֵט וּבֹטֵחַ, which are in apposition, is not at variance with this. The connection of יוֹשֶׁבֶת with בְּקִרְבָּהּ, which *Bertheau* revives from the earlier commentators, is opposed to the genius of the Hebrew language. שֹׁקֵט וּבֹטֵחַ, "*living quietly and safely there.*" וְאֵין־מַכְלִים וגו׳, "*and no one who seized the government to himself did any harm to them in the land.*" הַכְלִים, to shame, then to do an injury (1 Sam. xxv. 7). מַכְלִים דָּבָר, shaming with regard to a thing, *i.e.* doing any kind of injury. עֶצֶר, dominion, namely tyrannical rule, from עָצַר, *imperio coercere.* The rendering "riches" (*θησαυρός*, LXX.), which some give to this word, is founded simply upon a confounding of עֶצֶר with אוֹצָר. יָרַשׁ does not mean "to possess," but "to take possession of," and that by force (as in 1 Kings xxi. 18). "*And they were far from the Sidonians,*" so that in the event of a hostile invasion they could not obtain any assistance from this powerful city. *Grotius* draws the very probable conclusion from these words, that Laish may have been a colony of the Sidonians. "*And they had nothing to do with* (other) *men,*" *i.e.* they did not live in any close association with the inhabitants of other towns, so as to be able to obtain assistance from any other quarter.—Vers. 8, 9. On their return, the spies said to their fellow-citizens, in reply to the question מָה אַתֶּם, "*What have you accomplished?*" "*Up, let us go up against them* (the inhabitants of Laish), *for the land is very good, and ye are silent,*" *i.e.* standing inactive (1 Kings xxii. 3; 2 Kings vii. 9). "*Be not slothful to go* (to proceed thither), *to come and take possession of the land!*"—Ver. 10. "*When ye arrive, ye will come to a secure people* (*i.e.* a people living in careless security, and therefore very easy to overcome); *and the land is broad on both sides* (*i.e.* furnishes space to dwell in, and also to extend: *vid.* Gen. xxxiv. 21, 1 Chron. iv. 40); *for God has given it into your hand.*" They infer this from the oracular reply they had received from the Levite (ver. 6). "*A place where there is no want of anything that is in the land* (of Canaan)."

Vers. 11–29. *Removal of Six Hundred Danites to Laish—Robbery of Micah's Images—Conquest of Laish, and Settlement there.*—Vers. 11, 12. In consequence of the favourable account of the spies who returned, certain Danites departed from Zôrea and Eshtaol, to the number of 600 men, accoutred with weapons of war, with their families and their possessions in cattle and goods (see

ver. 21), and encamped by the way at Kirjath-jearim (*i.e.* Kuriyet Enab; see Josh. ix. 17), in the tribe territory of Judah, at a place which received the permanent name of *Mahaneh Dan* (camp of Dan) from that circumstance, and was situated behind, *i.e.* to the west of, Kirjath-jearim (see at chap. xiii. 25). The fact that this locality received a standing name from the circumstance described, compels us to assume that the Danites had encamped there for a considerable time, for reasons which we cannot determine from our want of other information. The emigrants may possibly have first of all assembled here, and prepared and equipped themselves for their further march.—Ver. 13. From this point they went across to the mountains of Ephraim, and came to Micah's house, *i.e.* to a place near it.—Ver. 14. Then the five men who had explored the land, viz. Laish (*Laish* is in apposition to הָאָרֶץ, the land), said to their brethren (tribe-mates), "*Know ye that in these houses* (the village or place where Micah dwelt) *there are an ephod and teraphim, and image and molten work* (see at chap. xvii. 4, 5)? *and now know what ye will do.*" The meaning of these last words is very easily explained: do not lose this opportunity of obtaining a worship of our own for our new settlement.—Ver. 15. Then they turned from the road thither, and went to the house of the young Levite, the house of Micah, and asked him (the Levite) concerning his health, *i.e.* saluted him in a friendly manner (see Gen. xliii. 27, Ex. xviii. 7, etc.).—Ver. 16. The 600 men, however, placed themselves before the door.—Ver. 17. Then the five spies went up, *sc.* into Micah's house of God, which must therefore have been in an upper room of the building (see 2 Kings xxiii. 12, Jer. xix. 13), and took the image, ephod, etc., whilst the priest stood before the door with the 600 armed men. With the words וּבָאוּ וגו׳ the narrative passes from the aorist or historical tense וַיַּעֲלוּ into the perfect. "The perfects do not denote the coming and taking on the part of the five men as a continuation of the previous account, but place the coming and taking in the same sphere of time as that to which the following clause, 'and the priest stood,' etc., belongs" (*Bertheau*). But in order to explain what appears very surprising, viz. that the priest should have stood before the gate whilst his house of God was being robbed, the course which the affair took is explained more clearly afterwards in vers. 18, 19, in the form of a circumstantial clause. Consequently the verbs in these verses ought to be rendered as pluperfects, and the different clauses comprised in one period, ver. 18 forming the protasis, and ver. 19 the apodosis.

"*Namely, when those* (five) *men had come into Micah's house, and had taken the image of the ephod, etc., and the priest had said to them, What are ye doing? they had said to him, Be silent, lay thy hand upon thy mouth and go with us, and become a father and priest to us* (see chap. xvii. 10). *Is it better to be a priest to the house of a single man, or to a tribe and family in Israel?*" The combination פֶּסֶל הָאֵפוֹד (the ephod-pesel), *i.e.* the image belonging to the ephod, may be explained on the ground, that the use of the ephod as a means of ascertaining the will of God presupposes the existence of an image of Jehovah, and does not prove that the ephod served as a covering for the *pesel*. The priest put on the ephod when he was about to inquire of God. The אוֹ in the second question is different from אִם, and signifies "or rather" (see Gen. xxiv. 55), indicating an improvement upon the first question (see *Ewald*, § 352, *a.*). Consequently it is not a sign of a later usage of speech, as *Bertheau* supposes. The word וּלְמִשְׁפָּחָה (unto a family) serves as a more minute definition or limitation of לְשֵׁבֶט (to a tribe). —Ver. 20. Then was the priest's heart glad (merry; cf. chap. xix. 6, 9, Ruth iii. 7), and he took the ephod, etc., and came amongst the people (the Danites). The first clause of this verse is attached to the supplementary statement in vers. 18, 19, for the purpose of linking on the further progress of the affair, which is given in the second clause; for, according to ver. 17, the priest could only receive the ephod, etc., into his charge from the hands of the Danites, since they had taken them out of Micah's God's house.—Ver. 21. The 600 Danites then set out upon their road again and went away; and they put the children, the cattle, and the valuable possessions in front, because they were afraid of being attacked by Micah and his people from behind. הַטַּף, "the little ones," includes both women and children, as the members of the family who were in need of protection (see at Ex. xii. 37). כְּבוּדָה is literally an adjective, signifying splendid; but here it is a neuter substantive: the valuables, not the heavy baggage. The 600 men had emigrated with their families and possessions.—Vers. 22, 23. The two clauses of ver. 22 are circumstantial clauses: "*When they* (the 600) *had got to some distance from Micah's house, and the men who were in the houses by Micah's house were called together, and had overtaken the Danites, they* (*i.e.* Micah and his people, whom he had called together from the neighbourhood to pursue the emigrants) *called to the Danites; and they turned their faces, and said to Micah, What is to thee* (what is the matter), *that thou hast gathered together?*"—

Vers. 24, 25. And when he replied, "*Ye have taken away my gods which I made, and the priest, and have departed; what is there still to me* (what have I left)? *and how can ye say to me, What is to thee?*" they ordered him to be silent, lest he should forfeit his life: "*Let not thy voice be heard among us, lest men of savage disposition* (מָרֵי נֶפֶשׁ as in 2 Sam. xvii. 8) *should fall upon thee* (*vid.* chap. xv. 12, viii. 21, etc.), *and thou shouldst not save thy life and that of thy household*," *i.e.* shouldst bring death upon thyself and thy family. וְאָסְפוּתָה is also dependent upon פֶּן.—Ver. 26. Then the Danites went their way; but Micah, seeing that they were stronger than he, turned back and returned home.—Vers. 27, 28. And they (the Danites) had taken what Micah had made, *i.e.* his idols and his priest, and they fell upon Laish (בּוֹא עַל, to come over a person, to fall upon him, as in Gen. xxxiv. 25), a people living quietly and free from care (*vid.* ver. 7), smote them with the edge of the sword (see at Gen. xxxiv. 26), and burned down the city (cf. Josh. vi. 24), as it had no deliverer in its isolated condition (ver. 28*a*; cf. ver. 7). It was situated "*in the valley which stretches to Beth-rehob.*" This valley is the upper part of the *Huleh* lowland, through which the central source of the Jordan (*Leddan*) flows, and by which *Laish-Dan*, the present *Tell el Kadi*, stood (see at Josh. xix. 47). *Beth-rehob* is most probably the same place as the *Rehob* mentioned in Num. xiii. 21, and the *Beth-rehob* of 2 Sam. x. 6, which is there used to designate a part of Syria, and for which *Rehob* only is also used in ver. 8. *Robinson* (Bibl. Res. pp. 371 sqq.) supposes it to be the castle of *Hunin* or *Honin*, on the south-west of *Tell el Kadi*; but this is hardly correct (see the remarks on Num. xiii. 21, Pent. vol. iii. p. 88). The city, which lay in ashes, was afterwards rebuilt by the Danites, and called *Dan*, from the name of the founder of their tribe; and the ruins are still to be seen, as already affirmed, on the southern slope of the *Tell el Kadi* (see *Rob.* Bibl. Res. pp. 391-2, and the comm. on Josh. xix. 47).

Vers. 30, 31. *Establishment of the Image-worship in Dan.*—After the rebuilding of Laish under the name of Dan, the Danites set up the *pesel* or image of Jehovah, which they had taken with them out of Micah's house of God. "*And Jehonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites till the day of the captivity of the land.*" As the Danites had taken the Levite whom Micah had engaged for his private worship with them to Dan, and had promised him the priesthood (vers. 19 and 27), *Jehonathan* can hardly be any other

than this Levite. He was a son of Gershom, the son of Moses (Ex. ii. 22, xviii. 3; 1 Chron. xxiii. 14, 15). Instead of גֵּרְשֹׁם, our Masoretic text has מְנַשֶּׁה with a hanging נ. With regard to this reading, the *Talmud* (Baba bathr. f. 109*b*) observes: "Was he a son of Gershom, or was he not rather a son of Moses? as it is written, the sons of Moses were Gershom and Eliezer (1 Chron. xxiii. 14), but because he did the deeds of Manasseh (the idolatrous son of Hezekiah, 2 Kings xxi.) the Scripture assigns him to the family of Manasseh." On this *Rabbabar bar Channa* observes, that "the prophet (*i.e.* the author of our book) studiously avoided calling Gershom *the son of Moses*, because it would have been ignominious to Moses to have had an ungodly son; but he calls him *the son of Manasseh*, raising the נ, however, above the line, to show that it might either be inserted or omitted, and that he was the son of either מְנַשֶּׁה (Manasseh) or מֹשֶׁה (Moses),—of Manasseh through imitating his impiety, of Moses by descent" (cf. *Buxtorfi Tiber.* p. 171). Later Rabbins say just the same. *R. Tanchum* calls the writing *Menasseh*, with a hanging *nun*, a תִּקּוּן סוֹפְרִים, and speaks of *ben Mosheh* as *Kethibh*, and *ben Menasseh* as *Keri*. *Ben Mosheh* is therefore unquestionably the original reading, although the other reading *ben Menasseh* is also very old, as it is to be found in the *Targums* and the *Syriac* and *Sept.* versions, although some *Codd.* of the LXX. have the reading *υἱοῦ Μωϋσῆ* (*vid. Kennic. dissert. gener. in V. T.* § 21).[1] *Jerome* also has *filii Moysi*. At the same time, it does not follow with certainty from the reading *ben Gershom* that Jehonathan was actually a son of Gershom, as *ben* frequently denotes a grandson in such genealogical accounts, unknown fathers being passed over in the genealogies. There is very little probability of his having been a son, for the simple reason, that if Jehonathan was the same person as Micah's high priest—and there is no ground for doubting this—he is described as נַעַר in chap. xvii. 7, xviii. 3, 15, and therefore was at any rate a young man, whereas the son of Gershom and grandson of Moses would certainly have passed the age of youth by a few years after the death of Joshua. This Jehonathan and his sons performed the duties of the priesthood at Dan עַד־יוֹם גְּלוֹת הָאָרֶץ. This statement is obscure. גְּלוֹת הָאָרֶץ can hardly mean anything else than the carrying away of the people of the land into exile, that is to say, of

[1] These two readings of the LXX. seem to be fused together in the text given by *Theodoret* (*quæst.* xxvi.): Ἰωνάθαν γάρ φησιν υἱὸς Μανασσῆ, υἱοῦ Γερσὼμ υἱοῦ Μωσῆ.

the inhabitants of Dan and the neighbourhood at least, since גָּלָה is the standing expression for this. Most of the commentators suppose the allusion to be to the Assyrian captivity, or primarily to the carrying away by Tiglath-Pileser of the northern tribes of Israel, viz. the population of Gilead, Galilee, and the tribe of Naphtali, in the midst of which Laish-Dan was situated (2 Kings xv. 29). But the statement in ver. 31, "*And they set them up Micah's graven image, which he made, all the time that the house of God was in Shiloh,*" is by no means reconcilable with such a conclusion. We find the house of God, *i.e.* the Mosaic tabernacle, which the congregation had erected at Shiloh in the days of Joshua (Josh. xviii. 1), still standing there in the time of Eli and Samuel (1 Sam. i. 3 sqq., iii. 21, iv. 3); but in the time of Saul it was at Nob (1 Sam. xxi.), and during the reign of David at Gibeon (1 Chron. xvi. 39, xxi. 29). Consequently "the house of God" only stood in Shiloh till the reign of Saul, and was never taken there again. If therefore Micah's image, which the Danites set up in Dan, remained there as long as the house of God was at Shiloh, Jonathan's sons can only have been there till Saul's time at the longest, and certainly cannot have been priests at this sanctuary in Dan till the time of the Assyrian captivity.[1] There are also other historical facts to be considered, which render the continuance of this Danite image-worship until the Assyrian captivity extremely improbable, or rather preclude it altogether. Even if we should not lay any stress upon the fact that the Israelites under Samuel put away the Baalim and Astartes in consequence of his appeal to them to turn to the Lord (1 Sam. vii. 4), it is hardly credible that in the time of David the image-worship should have continued at Dan by the side of the lawful worship of Jehovah which he restored and organized, and should not have been observed and suppressed by this king, who carried on repeated wars in the northern part of his kingdom. Still more incredible would the continuance of this image-worship appear after the erection of Solomon's temple, when all the men of Israel, and all the elders and heads of tribes, came to Jerusalem, at the summons of Solomon, to celebrate the consecration of this splendid national sanctuary (1 Kings v.–vii.). Lastly, the supposition that the image-worship established by the Danites

[1] The impossibility of reconciling the statement as to time in ver. 31 with the idea that "the captivity of the land" refers to the Assyrian captivity, is admitted even by *Bleek* (Einl. p. 349), who adopts *Houbigant's* conjecture, viz. גְּלוּת הָאָרוֹן, "the carrying away of the ark."

at Dan still continued to exist, is thoroughly irreconcilable with the fact, that when Jeroboam established the kingdom of the ten tribes he had two golden calves made as images of Jehovah for the subjects of his kingdom, and set up one of them at Dan, and appointed priests out of the whole nation who were not of the sons of Levi. If an image-worship of Jehovah had been still in existence in Dan, and conducted by Levitical priests, Jeroboam would certainly not have established a second worship of the same kind under priests who were not Levitical. All these difficulties preclude our explaining the expression, "the day of the captivity of the land," as referring to either the Assyrian or Babylonian captivity. It can only refer to some event which took place in the last years of Samuel, or the first part of the reign of Saul. *David Kimchi* and many others have interpreted the expression as relating to the carrying away of the ark by the Philistines, for which the words גָּלָה כָּבוֹד מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל are used in 1 Sam. iv. 21, 22 (*e.g. Hengstenberg*, Beitr. vol. ii. pp. 153 sqq.; *Hävernick*, Einl. ii. 1, p. 109; *O. v. Gerlach*, and others). With the carrying away of the ark of the covenant, the tabernacle lost its significance as a sanctuary of Jehovah. We learn from Ps. lxxviii. 59–64 how the godly in Israel regarded that event. They not only looked upon it as a casting away of the dwelling-place of God at Shiloh; but in the fact that Jehovah gave up His might and glory (*i.e.* the ark) into captivity, they discerned a surrender of the nation into the full power of its foes which resembled a carrying away into captivity. For, apart altogether from the description in Ps. lxxviii. 62–64, we may infer with certainty from the account of the tyranny which these foes still exercised over the Israelites in the time of Saul (1 Sam. xiii. 19–23), that, after this victory, the Philistines may have completely subjugated the Israelites, and treated them as their prisoners. We may therefore affirm with *Hengstenberg*, that "the author looked upon the whole land as carried away into captivity in its sanctuary, which formed as it were its kernel and essence." If, however, this figurative explanation of גְּלוּת הָאָרֶץ should not be accepted, there is no valid objection to our concluding that the words refer to some event with which we have no further acquaintance, in which the city of Dan was conquered by the neighbouring Syrians, and the inhabitants carried away into captivity. For it is evident enough from the fact of the kings of *Zoba* being mentioned, in 1 Sam. xiv. 47, among the different enemies of Israel against whom Saul carried on war, that the Syrians also invaded Israel in

the time of the Philistine supremacy, and carried Israelites away out of the conquered towns and districts. The Danite image-worship, however, was probably suppressed and abolished when Samuel purified the land and people from idolatry, after the ark had been brought back by the Philistines (1 Sam. ii. sqq.).

### WAR OF THE CONGREGATION WITH THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN ON ACCOUNT OF THE CRIME AT GIBEAH.—CHAP. XIX. XX.

This account belongs to the times immediately following the death of Joshua, as we may see from the fact that Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the contemporary of Joshua, was high priest at that time (chap. xx. 28). In chap. xix. we have an account of the infamous crime committed by the inhabitants of Gibeah, which occasioned the war; in chap. xx. the war itself; and in chap. xxi. an account of what was afterwards done by the congregation to preserve the tribe of Benjamin, which was almost annihilated by the war.

Chap. xix. INFAMOUS CRIME OF THE INHABITANTS OF GIBEAH.—Vers. 1–14. At the time when there was no king in Israel, a Levite, who sojourned (*i.e.* lived outside a Levitical town) in the more remote parts of the mountains of Ephraim, took to himself a concubine out of Bethlehem in Judah, who proved unfaithful to him, and then returned to her father's house. יַרְכְּתֵי הַר־אֶפְרַיִם, the hinder or outermost parts of the mountains of Ephraim, are the northern extremity of these mountains; according to ver. 18, probably the neighbourhood of Shiloh. תִּזְנֶה עָלָיו, "*she played the harlot out beyond him*," *i.e.* was unfaithful to her husband, "*and then went away from him*," back to her father's house.—Vers. 3, 4. Some time afterwards, namely at the end of four months (אַרְבָּעָה חֳדָשִׁים is in apposition to יָמִים, and defines more precisely the יָמִים, or days), her husband went after her, "*to speak to her to the heart*," *i.e.* to talk to her in a friendly manner (see Gen. xxxiv. 3), and to reconcile her to himself again, so that she might return; taking with him his attendant and a couple of asses, for himself and his wife to ride upon. The suffix attached to לַהֲשִׁיבוֹ refers to לִבָּהּ, "to bring back her heart," to turn her to himself again. The *Keri* הַשִּׁיבָהּ is a needless conjecture. "*And she brought him into her father's house, and her father received his son-in-law with joy, and constrained him* (יַחֲזֵק־בּוֹ, *lit.* held him fast) *to remain there three*

*days*." It is evident from this that the Levite had succeeded in reconciling his wife.—Vers. 5 sqq. Also on the fourth day, when he was about to depart in the morning, the Levite yielded to the persuasion of his father-in-law, that he would first of all strengthen his heart again with a bit of bread (סְעַד לֵב as in Gen. xviii. 5; the imperative form with ŏ is unusual); and then afterwards, whilst they were eating and drinking, he consented to stay another night. —Ver. 7. When he rose up to go, his father-in-law pressed him; then he turned back (וַיָּשָׁב is quite in place, and is not to be altered into וַיֵּשֶׁב, according to the LXX. and one Heb. Cod.), and remained there for the night.—Ver. 8. And even in the morning of the fifth day he suffered himself to be induced to remain till the afternoon. הִתְמַהְמֵהּ is an imperative, "Tarry till the day turns," *i.e.* till mid-day is past.—Vers. 9, 10. When at length he rose up, with his concubine and his attendant, to go away, the father entreated his daughter once more: "*Behold the day has slackened to become evening, spend the night here! Behold the declining of the day, spend the night here*," etc. חַנּוֹת inf. of חָנָה, to bend, incline. The interchange of the plural and singular may be explained from the simple fact that the Levite was about to depart with his wife and attendant, but that their remaining or departing depended upon the decision of the man alone. But the Levite did not consent to remain any longer, but set out upon the road, and came with his companions to before Jebus, *i.e.* Jerusalem, which is only two hours from Bethlehem (compare *Rob.* Pal. ii. 375 with 379). עַד־נֹכַח, to *before* Jebus, for the road from Bethlehem to Shiloh went past Jerusalem. —Vers. 11 sqq. But as the day had gone far down when they were by Jebus (רַד, third *pers. perf.*, either of יָרַד with י dropped like תִּתָּה in 2 Sam. xxii. 41 for נָתַתָּה, or from רָדַד in the sense of יָרַד), the attendant said to his master, "*Come, let us turn aside into this Jebusite city, and pass the night in it.*" But his master was unwilling to enter a city of the foreigners (נֵכָר is a genitive), where there were none of the sons of Israel, and would pass over to Gibeah. "*Come* (לְכָה = לֵךְ, Num. xxiii. 13), *we will draw near to one of the places* (which he immediately names), *and pass the night in Gibeah or Ramah.*" These two towns, the present *Jeba* and *er Râm*, were not a full hour's journey apart, and stood opposite to one another, only about two and a half or three hours from Jerusalem (see at Josh. xviii. 25, 28).—Ver. 14. Then they went forward, and the sun went down upon them as they were near (at) Gibeah of Benjamin.

Vers. 15–30. And they turned aside thither to pass the night in Gibeah; and he (the Levite) remained in the market-place of the town, as no one received them into his house to pass the night. —Vers. 16 sqq. Behold, there came an old man from the field, who was of the mountains of Ephraim, and dwelt as a stranger in Gibeah, the inhabitants of which were Benjaminites (as is observed here, as a preliminary introduction to the account which follows). When he saw the traveller in the market-place of the town, he asked him whither he was going and whence he came; and when he had heard the particulars concerning his descent and his journey, he received him into his house. וְאֶת־בֵּית יְ֝הוָה אֲנִי הֹלֵךְ (ver. 18), "*and I walk at the house of Jehovah, and no one receives me into his house*" (*Seb. Schm.*, etc.); not "I am going to the house of Jehovah" (*Ros.*, *Berth.*, etc.), for הָלַךְ אֵת does not signify to go to a place, for which the simple accusative is used either with or without ה local. It either means "to go through a place" (Deut. i. 19, etc.), or "to go with a person," or, when applied to things, "to go about with anything" (see Job xxxi. 5, and *Ges.* Thes. p. 378). Moreover, in this instance the Levite was not going to the house of Jehovah (*i.e.* the tabernacle), but, as he expressly told the old man, from Bethlehem to the outermost sides of the mountains of Ephraim. The words in question explain the reason why he was staying in the market-place. Because he served at the house of Jehovah, no one in Gibeah would receive him into his house,[1] although, as he adds in ver. 19, he had everything with him that was requisite for his wants. "*We have both straw and fodder for our asses, and bread and wine for me and thy maid, and for the young man with thy servants. No want of anything at all,*" so as to cause him to be burdensome to his host. By the words "thy maid" and "thy servants" he means himself and his concubine, describing himself and his wife, according to the obsequious style of the East in olden times, as servants of the man from whom he was expecting a welcome.—Ver. 20. The old man replied, "Peace to thee," assuring him of a welcome by this style of greeting; "*only all thy wants upon me*," *i.e.* let me provide for them. Thus the friendly host declined the offer made by his guest to provide for himself. "*Only do not pass the night in the market-place.*"—Ver. 21. He then took him into

[1] As *Seb. Schmidt* correctly observes, "the argument is taken from the indignity shown him: the Lord thinks me worthy to minister to Him, as a Levite, in His house, and there is not one of the people of the Lord who thinks me worthy to receive his hospitality."

his house, mixed fodder for his asses (יָבוֹל from בָּלַל, a *denom.* verb from בֵּלִיל, to make a mixture, to give fodder to the beasts), and waited upon his guest with washing of feet, food, and drink (see Gen. xviii. 4 sqq., xix. 2).—Ver. 22. Whilst they were enjoying themselves, some worthless men of the city surrounded the house, knocking continuously at the door (הִתְדַּפֵּק, a form indicative of gradual increase), and demanding of the master of the house that he would bring out the man who had entered his house, that they might know him,—the very same demand that the Sodomites had made of Lot (Gen. xix. 6 sqq.). The construct state אַנְשֵׁי בְנֵי־בְלִיַּעַל is used instead of אַנְשִׁים בְּנֵי־בְל (Deut. xiii. 14, etc.), because בני בליעל is regarded as *one* idea: people of worthless fellows. Other cases of the same kind are given by *Ewald*, Lehrb. § 289, *c*.—Vers. 23 sqq. The old man sought, as Lot had done, to defend his guests from such a shameful crime by appealing to the sacred rights of hospitality, and by giving up his own virgin daughter and the concubine of his guest (see the remarks on Gen. xix. 7, 8). נְבָלָה, *folly*, used to denote shameful licentiousness and whoredom, as in Gen. xxxiv. 7 and Deut. xxii. 21. עַנּוּ אוֹתָם, "humble them." The masculine is used in אוֹתָם and לָהֶם as the more general gender, instead of the more definite feminine, as in Gen. xxxix. 9, Ex. i. 21, etc.—Vers. 25 sqq. But as the people would not listen to this proposal, the man (no doubt the master of the house, according to ver. 24) took his (the guest's) concubine (of course with the consent of his guest) and led her out to them, and they abused her the whole night. It is not stated how it was that they were satisfied with this; probably because they felt too weak to enforce their demand. הִתְעַלֵּל בְּ, to exercise his power or wantonness upon a person (see Ex. x. 2).—Ver. 26. When the morning drew on (*i.e.* at the first dawn of day), the woman fell down before the door of the house in which אֲדוֹנֶיהָ, "her lord," *i.e.* her husband, was, and lay there till it was light, *i.e.* till sunrise.—Ver. 27. There her husband found her, when he opened the house-door to go his way (having given up all thought of receiving her back again from the barbarous crowd), "*lying before the house-door, and her hands upon the threshold*" (*i.e.* with outstretched arms), and giving no answer to his word, having died, that is to say, in consequence of the ill-treatment of the night. He then took the corpse upon his ass to carry it to his place, *i.e.* to his home.—Ver. 29. As soon as he arrived there, he cut up the body, according to its bones (as they cut slaughtered animals in pieces: see at Lev. i. 6), into twelve pieces, and sent

them (the corpse in its pieces) into the whole of the territory of Israel, *i.e.* to all the twelve tribes, in the hope that every one who saw it would say: No such thing has happened or been seen since the coming up of Israel out of Egypt until this day. Give ye heed to it (שִׂימוּ for לֵב שִׂימוּ); make up your minds and say on, *i.e.* decide, how this unparalleled wickedness is to be punished. Sending the dissected pieces of the corpse to the tribes was a symbolical act, by which the crime committed upon the murdered woman was placed before the eyes of the whole nation, to summon it to punish the crime, and was naturally associated with a verbal explanation of the matter by the bearer of the pieces. See the analogous proceeding on the part of Saul (1 Sam. xi. 7), and the Scythian custom related by *Lucian* in Toxaris, c. 48, that whoever was unable to procure satisfaction for an injury that he had received, cut an ox in pieces and sent it round, whereupon all who were willing to help him to obtain redress took a piece, and swore that they would stand by him to the utmost of their strength. The perfects וְהָיָה — וְאָמַר (ver. 30) are not used for the imperfects *c. vav consec.* וַיְהִי — וַיֹּאמֶר, as *Hitzig* supposes, but as simple perfects (*perfecta conseq.*), expressing the result which the Levite expected from his conduct; and we have simply to supply לֵאמֹר before וְהָיָה, which is often omitted in lively narrative or animated conversation (compare, for example, Ex. viii. 5 with Judg. vii. 2). The perfects are used by the historian instead of imperfects with a simple *vav*, which are commonly employed in clauses indicating intention, "because what he foresaw would certainly take place, floated before his mind as a thing already done" (*Rosenmüller*). The moral indignation, which the Levite expected on the part of all the tribes at such a crime as this, and their resolution to avenge it, are thereby exhibited not merely as an uncertain conjecture, but a fact that was sure to occur, and concerning which, as chap. xx. clearly shows, he had not deceived himself.

Chap. xx. WAR WITH BENJAMIN ON THE PART OF ALL THE OTHER TRIBES.—The expectation of the Levite was fulfilled. The congregation of Israel assembled at Mizpeh to pass sentence upon Gibeah, and formed the resolution that they would not rest till the crime was punished as it deserved (vers. 1–10). But when the Benjaminites refused to deliver up the offenders in Gibeah, and prepared to offer resistance, the other tribes began to make war upon Gibeah and Benjamin (vers. 11–19), but were twice defeated

by the Benjaminites with very great loss (vers. 20-28). At length, however, they succeeded by an act of stratagem in taking Gibeah and burning it to the ground, and completely routing the Benjaminites, and also in putting to death all the men and cattle that they found in the other towns of this tribe, and laying the towns in ashes, whereby the whole of the tribe of Benjamin was annihilated, with the exception of a very small remnant (vers. 29–48).

Vers. 1–11. *Decree of the Congregation concerning Gibeah.*—Vers. 1, 2. All the Israelites went out (rose up from their dwelling-places) to assemble together as a congregation like one man; all the tribes from Dan, the northern boundary of the land (*i.e.* Dan-laish, chap. xviii. 29), to Beersheba, the most southerly town of Canaan (see at Gen. xxi. 31), and the land of Gilead, *i.e.* the inhabitants of the land to the east of the Jordan, "*to Jehovah at Mizpeh*" in Benjamin, *i.e.* the present *Nebi-samwil*, in the neighbourhood of Kirjath-jearim, on the western border of the tribe of Benjamin (see at Josh. xviii. 26). It by no means follows with certainty from the expression "*to Jehovah*," that there was a sanctuary at Mizpeh, or that the ark of the covenant was taken thither, but simply that the meeting took place in the sight of Jehovah, or that the congregation assembled together to hold a judicial court, which they held in the name of Jehovah, analogous to the expression *el-Elohim* in Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 7. It was not essential to a judicial proceeding that the ark should be present. At this assembly the *pinnoth* (the corner-pillars) *of the whole nation presented themselves, i.e.* the heads and fathers as the supports of the congregation or of the state organism (*vid.* 1 Sam. xiv. 38, Isa. xix. 13), even of all the tribes of Israel, four hundred thousand men on foot, drawing the sword, *i.e.* armed foot soldiers ready for battle.—Ver. 3. "*The Benjaminites heard that the children of Israel* (the rest of the Israelites, the eleven tribes) *had come up to Mizpeh;*" but they themselves were not found there. This follows from the fact that nothing is said about the Benjaminites coming, and still more clearly from ver. 13, where it is stated that the assembled tribes sent men to the Benjaminites, after holding their deliberations and forming their resolutions, to call them to account for the crime that had been committed in the midst of them. Consequently the question with which the whole affair was opened, "*Say, how did this wicked deed take place?*" is not to be regarded as addressed to the two parties, the inhabitants of Gibeah or the Benjaminites *and* the Levite (*Bertheau*), but as a summons to all who were assembled to relate

what any one knew respecting the occurrence.—Vers. 4–7. Then the Levite, the husband of the murdered woman, described the whole affair. בַּעֲלֵי הַגִּבְעָה, the owners or citizens of Gibeah (see at chap. ix. 2). "*Me they intended to kill:*" the Levite draws this conclusion from what had happened to his wife; the men of Gibeah had not expressed any such intention in chap. xix. 22. "*All the country* (*lit.* field) *of the inheritance of Israel*," *i.e.* all the land of the Israelites. זִמָּה is applied to the vice of lewdness, as in Lev. xviii. 17, which was to be punished with death. הָבוּ לָכֶם וגו', "*give yourselves* (לָכֶם is *dat. comm.*) *word and counsel here*," *i.e.* make up your minds and pass sentence (*vid.* 2 Sam. xvi. 20). הֵלֹם, here, where you are all assembled together.—Ver. 8. Then all the people rose up as one man, saying, "*We will not any of us go into his tent, neither will we any of us return to his house*," *sc.* till this crime is punished. The sentence follows in ver. 9: "*This is the thing that we will do*," *i.e.* this is the way in which we will treat Gibeah: "*against it by lot*" (*sc.* we will act). The *Syriac* gives the sense correctly—We will cast lots upon it; but the LXX. quite erroneously supply *ἀναβησόμεθα* (we will go up); and in accordance with this, many expositors connect the words with ver. 10 in the following sense: "We will choose one man out of every ten by lot, to supply the army with the necessary provision during the expedition." This is quite a mistake, because in this way a subordinate point, which only comes into consideration in connection with the execution of the sentence, would be made the chief point, and the sentence itself would not be given at all. The words "*against it by lot*" contain the resolution that was formed concerning the sinful town, and have all the enigmatical brevity of judicial sentences, and are to be explained from the course laid down in the Mosaic law with regard to the Canaanites, who were to be exterminated, and their land divided by lot among the Israelites. Consequently the meaning is simply this: "Let us proceed with the lot against Gibeah," *i.e.* let us deal with it as with the towns of the Canaanites, conquer it, lay it in ashes, and distribute its territory by lot. In ver. 10 a subordinate circumstance is mentioned, which was necessary to enable them to carry out the resolution that had been made. As the assembled congregation had determined to keep together for the purpose of carrying on war (ver. 8), it was absolutely necessary that resources should be provided for those who were actively engaged in the war. For this purpose they chose one man in every ten "*to fetch provision for the people*," לַעֲשׂוֹת לְבוּאָם, "*that*

*they might do on their coming to Gibeah of Benjamin according to all the folly which had been done in Israel,*" *i.e.* might punish the wickedness in Gibeah as it deserved.—Ver. 11. Thus the men of Israel assembled together against Gibeah, united as one man. חֲבֵרִים, *lit.* as comrades, simply serves to strengthen the expression "as one man." With this remark, which indicates briefly the carrying out of the resolution that was adopted, the account of the meeting of the congregation is brought to a close; but the actual progress of the affair is really anticipated, inasmuch as what is related in vers. 12–21 preceded the expedition in order of time.

Vers. 12–19. Before the tribes of Israel entered upon the war, they sent men to all the tribes of Benjamin, who were to demand that the culprits in Gibeah should be given up to be punished, that the evil might thus be exterminated from Israel, according to the law in Deut. xxii. 22 as compared with chap. xiii. 6 and xvii. 12. "*The tribes of Benjamin*" are the same as "the families of Benjamin:" the historian pictured to himself the different divisions of the tribe of Benjamin as warlike powers about to carry on a war with the other tribes of Israel. The word *shebet* (tribe) is used in a different way in Num. iv. 18. But the Benjaminites would not hearken to the voice of their brethren, the other tribes of Israel. The *Keri* (sons of Benjamin) is a needless alteration, since *Benjamin* may be construed with the plural as a collective term. By refusing this just demand on the part of the other tribes, the Benjaminites took the side of the culprits in Gibeah, and compelled the congregation to make war upon the whole tribe.—Vers. 14 sqq. Both sides now made their preparations. The Benjaminites assembled together at Gibeah out of their different towns, and "*were mustered* 26,000 *men drawing the sword, beside the inhabitants of Gibeah they were mustered,* 700 *picked men*" (הִתְפָּקְדוּ, with the reduplication dropped, like the *Hothpael* in Num. i. 47). "*Out of all this people there were* 700 *picked men, lamed in the right hand, all these* (were) *slinging with a stone* (hitting) *at a hair's breadth without fail.*" These statements are not quite clear. Since, according to the distinct words of ver. 16, the 700 slingers with their left hands were "out of the whole people," *i.e.* out of the whole number of fighting men mentioned in ver. 16, they cannot be the same as the 700 chosen men referred to in ver. 15, notwithstanding the similarity in the numbers and the expression "chosen men." The obscurity arises chiefly from the word הִתְפָּקְדוּ in ver. 15, which is separated by the Masoretic accents from שִׁבְעַ מֵ, and connected

with the previous words: "*Beside the inhabitants of Gibeah they* (the men of the towns of Benjamin) *were mustered.*" On the other hand, the earlier translators took the clause as a relative one: "Beside the inhabitants of Gibeah, who were mustered 700 men." And this seems absolutely necessary, because otherwise the following words, "700 picked men," would stand without any connection; whilst we should certainly expect at least to find the *cop. vav*, if these 700 men were not inhabitants of Gibeah. But even if הִתְפַּקְּדוּ should be taken as a simple repetition of וַיִּתְפַּקְּדוּ, according to the analogy of Deut. iii. 5 and 1 Kings v. 30, the statement which follows could not be understood in any other way than as referring to the number of the fighting men of Gibeah. There is something striking too in the fact that only Benjaminites "out of the cities" are mentioned, and that emphasis is laid upon this by the repetition of the expression "out of the cities" (vers. 14, 15). Some have inferred from this, that the Benjaminites as the rulers had settled in the towns, whilst the Canaanites who had been subdued settled as dependants in the villages (*Bertheau*); or that the Benjaminites had formed military brotherhoods, the members of which lived unmarried in the towns, and that this may possibly account for the abominable crime to which the inhabitants of Gibeah were addicted, and in relation to which the whole tribe took their part (*O. v. Gerlach*). But such inferences as these are extremely uncertain, as the cities may be mentioned *a potiori* for all the places inhabited by this tribe. There is another difficulty in the numbers. According to vers. 14, 15, the total number of the fighting men of Benjamin amounted to 26,000 and 700, without reckoning Gibeah. But, according to the account of the battle, 25,100 were slain (ver. 35), viz. 18,000 in the principal engagement, 5000 as a gleaning, and 2000 in the pursuit, *i.e.* 25,000 men in all (vers. 44–46), and only 600 were left, who fled into the desert to the rock Rimmon (ver. 47). According to these accounts, the whole tribe would have contained only 25,100 + 600 = 25,700 fighting men, or 25,000 + 600 = 25,600. Accordingly, in ver. 15, the LXX. (*Cod. Al.* etc.) and *Vulgate* give only 25,000 men; whilst the rest of the ancient versions have 26,000, in agreement with the Masoretic text. *Josephus* (Ant. v. 2, 10) also gives the number of fighting men in Benjamin as 25,600, of whom 600 were splendid slingers; but he has merely taken the numbers from vers. 44–47. Now, although mistakes do frequently occur in the numbers given, it is a most improbable supposition that we have a mistake of this kind (26,000

for 25,000) in the instance before us, since even the latter number would not agree with vers. 44 sqq.; and the assumption, that in vers. 35 and 44 sqq. we have an account of *all* the Benjaminites who fell, finds no support whatever in the history itself. In the verses referred to we have simply a statement of the number of Benjaminites who fell in the defeat which they sustained on the third day, whereas the victories which they gained on the first and second days could hardly have been obtained without some loss on their part; on the contrary, we may confidently assume that they would not lose less than a thousand men, though these are not mentioned in the brief account before us. The other difference between ver. 35 and vers. 44–46, viz. that 25,100 are given in the one and 25,000 in the other, may be explained on the simple assumption that we have only the full thousands mentioned in the latter, whilst the exact number is given in the former. "*Left-handed:*" see at chap. iii. 15.—Vers. 17, 18. The forces of the other tribes amounted when numbered to 400,000 men. These numbers (26,000 Benjaminites and 400,000 Israelites) will not appear too great if we consider that the whole of the congregation of Israel took part in the war, with the simple exception of Jabesh in Gilead (chap. xxi. 8), and that in the time of Moses the twelve tribes numbered more than 600,000 men of twenty years old and upwards (Num. xxvi.), so that not much more than two-thirds of the whole of the fighting men went out to the war.—Ver. 18. Before opening the campaign the Israelites went to Bethel, to inquire of God which tribe should commence the war, *i.e.* should fight at the head of the other tribes (on the fact itself, see chap. i. 1); and God appointed the tribe of Judah, as in chap. i. 2. They went to Bethel,[1] not to Shiloh, where the tabernacle was standing, because that place was too far from the seat of war. The ark of the covenant was therefore brought to Bethel, and Phinehas the high priest inquired of the Lord before it through the Urim and Thummim (vers. 27, 28). Bethel was on the northern boundary of the tribe of Benjamin, and was consecrated to this purpose before any other place by the revelations of God which had been made to the patriarch Jacob there (Gen. xxviii. and xxxv.).—Ver. 19. Thus equipped, the Israelites proceeded against Gibeah.

Vers. 20–28. As soon as the Israelites had posted themselves at Gibeah in battle array (עָרַךְ מִלְחָמָה, to put in a row, or arrange the war or conflict, *i.e.* to put themselves in battle array, 1 Sam. iv. 2,

[1] Rendered "the house of God" in the English version.—Tr.

xvii. 2, etc.), the Benjaminites came out and destroyed 22,000 men of Israel upon that day. הַשְׁחִית אַרְצָה, to destroy to the earth, *i.e.* to lay dead upon the ground.—Ver. 22. Notwithstanding this terrible overthrow, the people strengthened themselves, and prepared again for battle, "at the same place" where they had made ready on the first day, "seeking out of pure vainglory to wipe out the stains and the disgrace which their previous defeat had brought upon them" (Berleb. Bible).—Ver. 23. But before renewing the conflict they went up to Bethel, wept there before Jehovah, *i.e.* before the sanctuary of the ark, where Jehovah was present in the midst of His people, enthroned between the cherubim, until the evening, and then inquired of the Lord (again through the high priest), "*Shall I again draw near to war with the children of Benjamin my brother*" (*i.e.* renew the war with him)? The answer ran thus: "*Advance against him.*"—Vers. 24, 25. But on the second day also the Benjaminites brought 18,000 of them to the ground. "The second day" is not the day following the first engagement, as if the battles had been fought upon two successive days, but the second day of actual fighting, which took place some days after the first; for the inquiry was made at Bethel as to the will of God between the two engagements.—Vers. 26 sqq. After this second terrible overthrow, "*the children of Israel*" (*i.e.* those who were engaged in the war), and "*all the people*," *i.e.* the rest of the people, those members of the congregation who were not capable of bearing arms, old men and women, came to Bethel, to complain to the Lord of their misfortune, and secure His favour by fasting and sacrifices. The congregation now discovered, from this repeated defeat, that the Lord had withdrawn His grace, and was punishing them. Their sin, however, did not consist in the fact that they had begun the war itself,—for the law in Deut. xxii. 22, to which they themselves had referred in ver. 13, really required this,—but rather in the state of mind with which they had entered upon the war, their strong self-consciousness, and great confidence in their own might and power. They had indeed inquired of God (*Elohim*) who should open the conflict; but they had neglected to humble themselves before Jehovah the covenant God, in the consciousness not only of their own weakness and sinfulness, but also of grief at the moral corruption of their brother-tribe. It is certainly not without significance, that in ver. 18 it is stated that "*they asked God*" (יִשְׁאֲלוּ בֵאלֹהִים), *i.e.* they simply desired a supreme or divine decision as to the question who should lead the van in the war; whereas, after

the first defeat, they wept before *Jehovah*, and inquired of *Jehovah* (ver. 23), the covenant God, for whose law and right they were about to contend. But even then there were still wanting the humility and penitence, without which the congregation of the Lord could not successfully carry on the conflict against the ungodly. The remark in ver. 22, "*The people felt* (showed) *themselves strong, and added* (continued) *to set in array the war*," is thoroughly expressive of the feeling of the congregation. They resolved upon the continuance of the war, in the full consciousness of their superior power and numerical strength; and it was not till afterwards that they complained to the Lord of their misfortune, and inquired whether they should renew the conflict. The question was followed by a corresponding answer on the part of God, "*Go up against him*," which certainly sanctioned the continuance of the war, but gave no promise as to the result, because the people, thinking that they might be certain of success, had not inquired about that at all. It was not till after the second severe defeat, when 22,000 and 18,000, the tenth part of the whole army, had fallen, that they humbled themselves before the Lord. They not only wept because of the calamity which had befallen them, but fasted the same day before the Lord, — the fasting being the manifest expression of the bending of the heart before God, — and offered burnt-offerings and peace-offerings. The *shelamim* here are not thank-offerings, but supplicatory offerings, presented to implore the gracious assistance of God, and to commemorate the enjoyment of fellowship with the Lord, through the sacrificial meal associated with this sacrifice (as in chap. xxi. 4, 1 Sam. xiii. 9, 2 Sam. xxiv. 25).—Vers. 27, 28. Having made these preparations, they inquired of the Lord whether they should continue the war, and received this reply: "*Go up* (against Benjamin); *for to-morrow I will give it into thy hand*" (יָדֶךָ, the hand of the congregation carrying on the war). To this the supplementary remark is appended, that the ark of the covenant was at Bethel in those days, and the high priest served before it. The expression "in those days" implies that the ark of the covenant was only temporarily at Bethel, and therefore had been brought thither from the tabernacle at Shiloh during this war.

Vers. 29–48. *The Victory on the Third Day's Engagement.*—Ver. 29. The account of this commences with the most important point, so far as their success was concerned: Israel set liers in wait (troops in ambush) round about Gibeah.—Ver. 30. They then advanced

as on the former occasions.—Vers. 31, 32. The Benjaminites came out again to meet the people (of Israel), and were drawn away from the town (the perfect הֻנְתְּקוּ without ו is subordinate to the preceding verb, and defines more precisely the advance itself, whilst the mode in which they were drawn away from the town is not described more fully till vers. 32, 33), and began to smite the beaten of the people (who pretended to fly) as formerly upon the roads (where two roads part), of which one led up to Bethel and the other to Gibeah, into the field (Gibeah is the town at which the battle took place, that is to say, somewhere in the neighbourhood, so that a road might easily run from the field of battle towards the town into the field), "*about* (*sc.* putting to death) *thirty men of Israel.*" This statement introduces the more precise definition of the חֲלָלִים.—Ver. 32. Then the Benjaminites supposed that Israel was beaten by them as before; but the Israelites said: We will flee, and draw it (the tribe of Benjamin) away from the town to the roads (the high-roads mentioned in ver. 31). On the *Dagesh dirimens* in נִתַּקְנוּהוּ, see *Ewald*, § 92, *c.*—Ver. 33. Carrying out this plan, "all the men of Israel rose up from their place," *i.e.* left the place they had occupied, drew back, "and set themselves in battle array" in *Baal-thamar*, *i.e.* palm-place, which still existed, according to the *Onom.*, in the time of *Eusebius*, as a small place in the neighbourhood of Gibeah, bearing the name of *Bethamar*. While this was going on, the ambush of Israel broke forth from its position "from the plains of Geba." The *ἅπ. λεγ.* מַעֲרֵה, from עָרָה to strip, denotes a naked region destitute of wood. גֶּבַע is the masculine form for גִּבְעָה, and מִמַּעֲרֵה־גָבַע a more precise definition of מִמְּקוֹמוֹ. This rendering, which is the one given in the Targum, certainly appears the simplest explanation of a word that has been rendered in very different ways, and which the LXX. left untranslated as a proper name, *Μαραγαβέ*. The objection raised to this, viz. that a naked level country was not a place for an ambush, has no force, as there is no necessity to understand the words as signifying that the treeless country formed the actual hiding-place of the ambush; but the simple meaning is, that when the men broke from their hiding-place, they came from the treeless land towards the town. The rendering given by *Rashi*, *Trem.*, and others, "on account of the stripping of Gibeah," is much less suitable, since, apart from the difficulty of taking מִן in different senses so close together, we should at least expect to find הָעִיר (the city) instead of גֶּבַע.—Ver. 34. Through the advance of the ambush there came 10,000 picked men of all

Israel "from opposite to Gibeah" (who now attacked in the rear the Benjaminites who were pursuing the flying army of Israel); "*and the contest became severe, since they* (the Benjaminites) *did not know that the calamity was coming upon them.*"—Ver. 35. And Jehovah smote Benjamin before Israel (according to His promise in ver. 28), so that the Israelites destroyed of Benjamin on that day twenty and five thousand and an hundred men (*i.e.* twenty-five thousand and upwards).

This was the result of the battle, which the historian gives at once, before entering more minutely into the actual account of the battle itself. He does this in vers. 36–46 in a series of explanations, of which one is attached to the other, for the most part in the form of circumstantial clauses, so that it is not till ver. 46 that he again comes to the result already announced in ver. 35.[1]—Ver. 36. The Benjaminites, for instance, saw (this is the proper rendering of וַיִּרְאוּ with *vav consec.*, which merely indicates the order of thought, not that of time) that they were beaten, and the men of Israel vacated the field before Benjamin (נָתַן מָקוֹם, to give place by falling back and flying), because they relied upon the ambush which they had placed against Gibeah. The Benjaminites did not perceive this till the ambush fell upon their rear. But the ambush itself, as is added in ver. 37 by way of further explanation, hastened and fell (fell as quickly as possible) into Gibeah, and went thither and smote the whole town with the edge of the sword. To this there is added the further explanation in ver. 38: "*And the arrangement of the Israelites with the ambush was this: multiply, to cause smoke-rising to ascend* (*i.e.* cause a great cloud of smoke to ascend) *out of the city.*" The only objection that can be raised to this view of הַרְבּוּ, as the imperative *Hiphil* of רָבָה, is the suffix ם־ attached to לְהַעֲלוֹתָם, since this is unsuitable to a direct address. This suffix can only be explained by supposing that there is an admixture of two constructions, the direct appeal, and the indirect explanation, that they were to cause to ascend. If this be not admitted, however, we can only follow *Studer*, and erase the suffix as an error of the pen occasioned by the following word מַשְׂאֵת; for the other course sug-

[1] The opinions expressed by *De Wette*, etc., that ver. 35 is spurious, and by *Bertheau*, that vers. 36–46 contain a different account of the battle, simply prove that they have overlooked this peculiarity in the Hebrew mode of writing history, viz. that the general result of any occurrence is given as early as possible, and then the details follow afterwards; whilst these critics have not succeeded in adducing even apparent differences in support of their opinions.

gested by *Bertheau*, namely that הֶרֶב should be struck out as a gloss, is precluded by the circumstance that there is no possible way of explaining the interpolation of so apparently unsuitable a word into the text. It certainly stood in the text used by the LXX., though they have most foolishly confounded הֶרֶב with חֹרֶב, and rendered it *μάχαιρα*.—Ver. 39. "*And the men of Israel turned in the battle:*" that is to say, as is afterwards more fully explained in vers. 39, 40, in the form of a long new circumstantial clause, whilst Benjamin had begun to smite, etc. (repeated from vers. 31, 32), and the cloud (מַשָּׂאת הָעָשָׁן = הַמַּשְׂאֵת, ver. 38) had begun to ascend out of the city as a pillar of smoke, and Benjamin turned back, and behold the whole city ascended towards heaven (in smoke), Israel turned (fighting) and Benjamin was terrified, for it saw that misfortune had come upon it (see ver. 34). In ver. 41*a*, the thread of the narrative, which was interrupted by the long circumstantial clause, is again resumed by the repetition of "*and the men of Israel turned.*"—Ver. 42. The Benjaminites "*now turned* (flying) *before the Israelites to the way of the desert*," *i.e.* no doubt the desert which rises from Jericho to the mountains of Bethel (Josh. xvi. 1). They fled therefore towards the north-east; but the battle had overtaken (reached or seized) them, and those out of the towns (had perished). The difficult expression וַאֲשֶׁר מֵהֶעָרִים, of which very different, and for the most part arbitrary, explanations have been given, can only be in apposition to the suffix attached to the verb: "Benjamin, and in fact those who had come to the help of Gibeah out of the towns of Benjamin" (see vers. 14, 15), *i.e.* all the Benjaminites. The following words, מַשְׁחִיתִים וגו׳, are a circumstantial clause explanatory of the previous clause, וְהִמַּלְחָמָה הִדְבִּיקַתְהוּ: "*since they* (the men of Israel) *destroyed him* (Benjamin) *in the midst of it.*" The singular suffix בְּתוֹכוֹ does not refer to Benjamin, as this would yield no sense at all, but to the preceding words, "the way of the desert" (see ver. 45).—In ver. 43 the account is continued by three perfects attached to one another without a copula: "*they enclosed* (hedged round) *Benjamin, pursued him; at the place of rest they trod him down to before Gibeah eastwards.*" מְנוּחָה is not used adverbially in the sense of "quietly," which would not give any fitting meaning, but is an *accus. loci*, and signifies place of rest, as in Num. x. 33. The notice "to before Gibeah" refers to all three verbs.—Ver. 44. In this battle there fell of Benjamin 18,000 men, all brave men. The אֵת before כָּל־אֵלֶּה is not a preposition, "*with*" (as the LXX., *Cod. Al.*, and *Bertheau* render it), but a sign of the accusative. It serves to show that the

thought which follows is governed by the principal clause, "*so far as all these were concerned, they were brave men.*"—Ver. 45. The remainder fled to the desert, to the rock (of the place) *Rimmon*, which is described in the *Onom.* (*s. v. Remmon*) as a *vicus* fifteen Roman miles to the north of Jerusalem. It has been preserved in the village of *Rummón*, which stands upon and around the summit of a conical limestone mountain, and is visible in all directions (*Rob.* Pal. ii. p. 113). "*And they* (the Israelites) *smote as a gleaning upon the roads* 5000 *men.*" עוֹלֵל, to have a gleaning of the battle, *i.e.* to smite or slay, as it were, as a gleaning of the principal battle (*vid.* Jer. vi. 9). *Mesilloth* are the high-roads mentioned in ver. 31. "*And pursued them to Gideom, and smote of them* 2000 *more.*" The situation of Gideom, which is only met with here, is not precisely known; but it must have been somewhere between Gibeah and Rimmon, as the rock Rimmon, according to ver. 47, afforded a safe place of refuge to the fugitives.—Ver. 46. On the total number of the slain, see the remarks on ver. 15.—In ver. 47 the statement already made in ver. 45 with regard to the flight is resumed; and it is still further related, that 500 men reached the rock Rimmon, and dwelt there four months, *i.e.* till the occurrence described in chap. xxi. 13 sqq.—Ver. 48. The Israelites turned (from any further pursuit of the fugitive warriors of Benjamin) to the children of Benjamin, *i.e.* to such of the people of the tribe of Benjamin as were unarmed and defenceless, and smote them with the edge of the sword, "*from the town* (or towns) *onwards, men to cattle* (*i.e.* men, women, children, and cattle), *to every one who was found;*" *i.e.* they cut down men and cattle without quarter, from the towns onwards even to those who were found elsewhere. עַד כָּל־הַנִּמְצָא (to all that was found) corresponds to מֵעִיר (from the city), and מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה (men to beast) serves as a more precise definition of the עִיר (city): everything that was in the city, man and beast. מְתָם is pointed wrongly for מָתָם, *men*, the reading in several MSS. and most of the early editions (see Deut. ii. 34, iii. 6). They also set fire to all the towns that were met with, *i.e.* all without exception. Thus they did the same to the Benjaminites as to the Canaanites who were put under the ban, carrying out the ban with the strictest severity.

## PRESERVATION OF THE TRIBE OF BENJAMIN—THE REMNANT PROVIDED WITH WIVES.—CHAP. XXI.

Through the extraordinary severity with which the tribes of Israel had carried on the war against Benjamin, this tribe had been reduced to 600 men, and thus brought very near to extermination. Such a conclusion to the sanguinary conflict went to the heart of the congregation. For although, when forming the resolution to punish the unparalleled wickedness of the inhabitants of Gibeah with all the severity of the law, they had been urged on by nothing else than the sacred duty that was binding upon them to root out the evil from their midst, and although the war against the whole tribe of Benjamin was justified by the fact that they had taken the side of the culprits, and had even received the approval of the Lord; there is no doubt that in the performance of this resolution, and the war that was actually carried on, feelings of personal revenge had disturbed the righteous cause in consequence of the defeat which they had twice sustained at the hands of the Benjaminites, and had carried away the warriors into a war of extermination which was neither commanded by the law nor justified by the circumstances, and had brought about the destruction of a whole tribe from the twelve tribes of the covenant nation with the exception of a small vanishing remnant. When the rash deed was done, the congregation began most bitterly to repent. And with repentance there was awakened the feeling of brotherly love, and also a sense of duty to provide for the continuance of the tribe, which had been brought so near to destruction, by finding wives for those who remained, in order that the small remnant might grow into a vigorous tribe again.

Vers. 1–14. The proposal to find wives for the six hundred Benjaminites who remained was exposed to this difficulty, that the congregation had sworn at Mizpeh (as is supplemented in ver. 1 to the account in chap. xx. 1–9) that no one should give his daughter to a Benjaminite as a wife.—Vers. 2, 3. After the termination of the war, the people, *i.e.* the people who had assembled together for the war (see ver. 9), went again to Bethel (see at chap. xx. 18, 26), to weep there for a day before God at the serious loss which the war had brought upon the congregation. Then they uttered this lamentation: "*Why, O Lord God of Israel, is this come to pass in Israel, that a tribe is missing to-day from Israel?*" This lamentation involved the wish that God might show them the way to avert the

threatened destruction of the missing tribe, and build up the six hundred who remained. To give a practical expression to this wish, they built an altar the next morning, and offered burnt-offerings and supplicatory offerings upon it (see at chap. xx. 26), knowing as they did that their proposal would not succeed without reconciliation to the Lord, and a return to the fellowship of His grace. There is something apparently strange in the erection of an altar at Bethel, since sacrifices had already been offered there during the war itself (chap. xx. 26), and this could not have taken place without an altar. Why it was erected again, or another one built, is a question which cannot be answered with any certainty. It is possible, however, that the first was not large enough for the number of sacrifices that had to be offered now.—Ver. 5. The congregation then resolved upon a plan, through the execution of which a number of virgins were secured for the Benjaminites. They determined that they would carry out the great oath, which had been uttered when the national assembly was called against such as did not appear, upon that one of the tribes of Israel which had not come to the meeting of the congregation at Mizpeh. The deliberations upon this point were opened (ver. 5) with the question, "*Who is he who did not come up to the meeting of all the tribes of Israel, to Jehovah?*" In explanation of this question, it is observed at ver. 5, "*For the great oath was uttered upon him that came not up to Jehovah to Mizpeh: he shall be put to death.*" We learn from this supplementary remark, that when important meetings of the congregation were called, all the members were bound by an oath to appear. The meeting at Mizpeh is the one mentioned in chap. xx. 1 sqq. The "great oath" consisted in the threat of death in the case of any that were disobedient. To this explanation of the question in ver. 5*a*, the further explanation is added in vers. 6, 7, that the Israelites felt compassion for Benjamin, and wished to avert its entire destruction by procuring wives for such as remained. The word וַיִּנָּחֲמוּ in ver. 6 is attached to the explanatory clause in ver. 5*b*, and is to be rendered as a pluperfect: "*And the children of Israel had shown themselves compassionate towards their brother Benjamin, and said, A tribe is cut off from Israel to-day; what shall we do to them, to those that remain with regard to wives, as we have sworn?*" etc. (compare ver. 1). The two thoughts—(1) the oath that those who had not come to Mizpeh should be punished with death (ver. 5*b*), and (2) anxiety for the preservation of this tribe which sprang from compassion towards Benjamin, and was shown in their endeavour to

provide such as remained with wives, without violating the oath that none of them would give them their own daughters as wives—formed the two factors which determined the course to be adopted by the congregation. After the statement of these two circumstances, the question of ver. 5*a*, "*Who is the one* (only one) *of the tribes of Israel which*," etc., is resumed and answered: "*Behold, there came no one into the camp from Jabesh in Gilead, into the assembly.*" שִׁבְטֵי is used in vers. 8, 5, in a more general sense, as denoting not merely the tribes as such, but the several subdivisions of the tribes.—Ver. 9. In order, however, to confirm the correctness of this answer, which might possibly have been founded upon a superficial and erroneous observation, the whole of the (assembled) people were mustered, and not one of the inhabitants of Jabesh was found there (in the national assembly at Bethel). The situation of *Jabesh* in Gilead has not yet been ascertained. This town was closely besieged by the Ammonite *Nahash*, and was relieved by Saul (1 Sam. xi. 1 sqq.), on which account the inhabitants afterwards showed themselves grateful to Saul (1 Sam. xxxi. 8 sqq.). *Josephus* calls *Jabesh* the metropolis of Gilead (Ant. vi. 5, 1). According to the *Onom.* (*s. v. Jabis*), it was six Roman miles from Pella, upon the top of a mountain towards Gerasa. *Robinson* (Bibl. Res. p. 320) supposes it to be the ruins of *ed Deir* in the Wady *Jabes*.—Vers. 10 sqq. To punish this unlawful conduct, the congregation sent 12,000 brave fighting men against Jabesh, with orders to smite the inhabitants of the town with the edge of the sword, together with their wives and children, but also with the more precise instructions (ver. 11), "to ban all the men, and women who had known the lying with man" (*i.e.* to slay them as exposed to death, which implied, on the other hand, that virgins who had not lain with any man should be spared). The fighting men found 400 such virgins in Jabesh, and brought them to the camp at Shiloh in the land of Canaan. אוֹתָם (ver. 12) refers to the virgins, the masculine being used as the more common genus in the place of the feminine. *Shiloh*, with the additional clause "in the land of Canaan," which was occasioned by the antithesis Jabesh in *Gilead*, as in Josh. xxi. 2, xxii. 9, was the usual meeting-place of the congregation, on account of its being the seat of the tabernacle. The representatives of the congregation had moved thither, after the deliberations concerning Jabesh, which were still connected with the war against Benjamin, were concluded.—Ver. 13. The congregation then sent to call the Benjaminites, who had taken refuge

upon the rock Rimmon, and gave them as wives, when they returned (*sc.* into their own possessions), the 400 virgins of Jabesh who had been preserved alive. "*But so they sufficed them not*" (לֹא, so, *i.e.*, in their existing number, 400: *Bertheau*). In this remark there is an allusion to what follows.

Vers. 15–25. Of the six hundred Benjaminites who had escaped, there still remained two hundred to be provided with wives. To these the congregation gave permission to take wives by force at a festival at Shiloh. The account of this is once more introduced, with a description of the anxiety felt by the congregation for the continuance of the tribe of Benjamin. Vers. 15, 16, and 18 are only a repetition of vers. 6 and 7, with a slight change of expression. The "*breach* (*perez*) *in the tribes of Israel*" had arisen from the almost complete extermination of Benjamin. "*For out of Benjamin is* (every) *woman destroyed*," viz. by the ruthless slaughter of the whole of the people of that tribe (chap. xx. 48). Consequently the Benjaminites who were still unmarried could not find any wives in their own tribe. The fact that four hundred of the Benjaminites who remained were already provided with wives is not noticed here, because it has been stated just before, and of course none of them could give up their own wives to others.—Ver. 17. Still Benjamin must be preserved as a tribe. The elders therefore said, "*Possession of the saved shall be for Benjamin*," *i.e.* the tribe-land of Benjamin shall remain an independent possession for the Benjaminites who have escaped the massacre, so that a tribe may not be destroyed out of Israel. It was necessary, therefore, that they should take steps to help the remaining Benjaminites to wives. The other tribes could not give them their daughters, on account of the oath which has already been mentioned in vers. 1 and 7*b* and is repeated here (ver. 18). Consequently there was hardly any other course open, than to let the Benjaminites seize upon wives for themselves. And the elders lent them a helping hand by offering them this advice, that at the next yearly festival at Shiloh, at which the daughters of Shiloh carried on dances in the open air (outside the town), they should seize upon wives for themselves from among these daughters, and promising them that when the thing was accomplished they would adjust it peaceably (vers. 19–22). The "*feast of Jehovah*," which the Israelites kept from year to year, was one of the three great annual festivals, probably one which lasted seven days, either the passover or the feast of tabernacles,—most likely the former, as the dances of the

daughters of Shiloh were apparently an imitation of the dances of the Israelitish women at the Red Sea under the superintendence of Miriam (Ex. xv. 20). The minute description of the situation of Shiloh (ver. 19), viz. "to the north of Bethel, on the east of the road which rises from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of *Lebonah*" (the present village of *Lubban*, on the north-west of Seilun: see *Rob.* Pal. iii. p. 89), serves to throw light upon the scene which follows, *i.e.* to show how the situation of Shiloh was peculiarly fitted for the carrying out of the advice given to the Benjaminites; since, as soon as they had issued from their hiding-places in the vineyards at Shiloh, and seized upon the dancing virgins, they could easily escape into their own land by the neighbouring high-road which led from Bethel to Shechem, without being arrested by the citizens of Shiloh.—Ver. 20. The *Kethibh* וַיֹּצוּ in the singular may be explained on the ground that one of the elders spoke and gave the advice in the name of the others. חָטַף in ver. 21 and Ps. x. 9, to seize hold of, or carry off as prey = חָתַף.—Ver. 22. "*And when the fathers or brethren of the virgins carried off, come to us to chide with us, we* (the elders) *will say to them* (in your name), *Present them to us* (אוֹתָם as in ver. 12); *for we did not receive every one his wife through the war* (with Jabesh); *for ye have not given them to them; now would ye be guilty.*" The words "Present them to us," etc., are to be understood as spoken in the name of the Benjaminites, who were accused of the raid, to the relatives of the virgins who brought the complaint. This explains the use of the pronoun in the first person in חָנֹנּוּ and לָקַחְנוּ, which must not be altered therefore into the third person.[1] The two clauses commencing with כִּי are co-ordinate, and contain two points serving to enforce the request, "Present them," etc. The first is pleaded in the name of the Benjaminites; the second is adduced, as a general ground on the part of the elders of the congregation, to pacify the fathers and brothers making the complaint, on account of the oath which the Israelites had taken, that none of them would give their daughters as wives to the Benjaminites. The meaning

[1] One circumstance which is decisive against this alteration of the text is, that the Seventy had the Masoretic text before them, and founded their translation upon it (ἐλεήσατε ἡμῖν αὐτάς, ὅτι οὐκ ἐλάβομεν ἀνὴρ γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ). The different rendering of *Jerome* given in the *Vulgate—miseremini eorum! non enim rapuerunt eas jure bellantium atque victorum*—is nothing but an unfortunate and unsuccessful attempt to get rid of the difficulties connected with the readings in the text.

is the following: Ye may have your daughters with the Benjaminites who have taken them by force, for ye have not given them voluntarily, so as to have broken your oath by so doing. In the last clause כָּעֵת has an unusual meaning: "at the time" (or *now*), *i.e.* *in that case*, ye would have been guilty, viz. if ye had given them voluntarily. — Ver. 23. The Benjaminites adopted this advice. They took to themselves wives according to their number, *i.e.* two hundred (according to ver. 12, compared with chap. xx. 47), whom they caught from the dancing daughters of Shiloh, and returned with them into their inheritance, where they rebuilt the towns that had been reduced to ashes, and dwelt therein.

In vers. 24 and 25, the account of this event is brought to a close with a twofold remark: (1) that the children of Israel, *i.e.* the representatives of the congregation who were assembled at Shiloh, separated and returned every man into his inheritance to his tribe and family; (2) that at that time there was no king in Israel, and every man was accustomed to do what was right in his own eyes. Whether the fathers or brothers of the virgins who had been carried off brought any complaint before the congregation concerning the raid that had been committed, the writer does not state, simply because this was of no moment so far as the history was concerned, inasmuch as, according to ver. 22, the complaint made no difference in the facts themselves.[1] With the closing remark in ver. 25, however, with which the account returns to its commencement in chap. xix. 1, the prophetic historian sums up his judgment upon the history in the words, "At that time every man did what was right in his own eyes, because there was no king in Israel," in which the idea is implied, that under the government of a king, who administered right and justice in the kingdom, such things could not possibly have happened. This not only refers to the conduct of the Israelites towards Benjamin in the war, the severity of which was not to be justified (see p. 458), but also to their conduct towards the inhabitants of Jabesh, as described in chap. xxi. 5 sqq. The congregation had no doubt a perfect right, when all the people were summoned to deliberate upon important matters affecting

[1] "No doubt the fathers and brothers of the virgins demanded them both from the Benjaminites themselves, and also from the elders of Israel, or at any rate petitioned that the Benjaminites might be punished: but the elders replied as they had said that they should; and the persons concerned were satisfied with the answer, and so the affair was brought to a peaceable termination."— *Seb. Schmidt.*

the welfare of the whole nation, to utter the "great oath" against such as failed to appear, *i.e.* to threaten them with death and carry out this threat upon such as were obstinate; but such a punishment as this could only be justly inflicted upon persons who were really guilty, and had rebelled against the congregation as the supreme power, and could not be extended to women and children unless they had also committed a crime deserving of death. But even if there were peculiar circumstances in the case before us, which have been passed over by our author, who restricts himself simply to points bearing upon the main purpose of the history, but which rendered it necessary that the ban should be inflicted upon all the inhabitants of Jabesh, it was at any rate an arbitrary exemption to spare all the marriageable virgins, and one which could not be justified by the object contemplated, however laudable that object might be. This also applies to the oath taken by the people, that they would not give any of their daughters as wives to the Benjaminites, as well as to the advice given by the elders to the remaining two hundred, to carry off virgins from the festival at Shiloh. However just and laudable the moral indignation may have been, which was expressed in that oath by the nation generally at the scandalous crime of the Gibeites, a crime unparalleled in Israel, and at the favour shown to the culprits by the tribe of Benjamin, the oath itself was an act of rashness, in which there was not only an utter denial of brotherly love, but the bounds of justice were broken through. When the elders of the nation came to a better state of mind, they ought to have acknowledged their rashness openly, and freed themselves and the nation from an oath that had been taken in such sinful haste. "Wherefore they would have acted far more uprightly, if they had seriously confessed their fault and asked forgiveness of God, and given permission to the Benjaminites to marry freely. In this way there would have been no necessity to cut off the inhabitants of Jabesh from their midst by cruelty of another kind" (*Buddeus*). But if they felt themselves bound in their consciences to keep the oath inviolably, they ought to have commended the matter to the Lord in prayer, and left it to His decision; whereas, by the advice given to the Benjaminites, they had indeed kept the oath in the letter, but had treated it in deed and truth as having no validity whatever.

# THE BOOK OF RUTH.[1]

## INTRODUCTION.

### CONTENTS, CHARACTER, AND ORIGIN OF THE BOOK OF RUTH.

THE book of *Ruth* (*Ρούθ*) introduces us to the family life of the ancestors of king David, and informs us, in a simple and attractive form of historical narrative, and one in harmony with the tender and affectionate contents, how *Ruth* the Moabitess, a daughter-in-law of the Bethlehemite Elimelech, of the family of Judah, who had emigrated with his wife and his two sons into the land of Moab on account of a famine, left father and mother, fatherland and kindred, after the death of her husband, and out of childlike affection to her Israelitish mother-in-law Naomi, whose husband had also died in the land of Moab, and went with her to Judah, to take refuge under the wings of the God of Israel (chap. i.); and how, when there, as she was going in her poverty to glean some ears of corn in the field of a wealthy man, she came apparently by accident to the field of Boaz, a near relation of Elimelech, and became acquainted with this honourable and benevolent man (chap. ii.); how she then sought marriage with him by the wish of her mother-in-law (chap. iii.), and was taken by him as a wife, according to the custom of Levirate marriage, in all the ordinary legal forms, and bare a son in this marriage, named Obed. This Obed was the grandfather of David (chap. iv. 1–17), with whose genealogy the book closes (chap. iv. 18–22).

[1] The book of *Ruth* does not indeed belong to the prophetical books of history so far as its historical character is concerned, and even in the Hebrew canon it is placed among the hagiographa; but as its contents directly follow upon those of the book of Judges, it seemed advisable to place the exposition immediately after that of Judges.

In this conclusion the meaning and tendency of the whole narrative is brought clearly to light. The genealogical proof of the descent of David from Perez through Boaz and the Moabitess Ruth (chap. iv. 18–22) forms not only the end, but the starting-point, of the history contained in the book. For even if we should not attach so much importance to this genealogy as to say with *Auberlen* that "the book of Ruth contains, as it were, the inner side, the spiritually moral background of the genealogies which play so significant a part even in the Israelitish antiquity;" so much is unquestionably true, that the book contains a historical picture from the family life of the ancestors of David, intended to show how the ancestors of this great king walked uprightly before God and man in piety and singleness of heart, and in modesty and purity of life. "Ruth, the Moabitish great-great-grandmother of David, longed for the God and people of Israel with all the deepest earnestness of her nature, and joined herself to them with all the power of love; and Boaz was an upright Israelite, without guile, full of holy reverence for every ordinance of God and man, and full of benevolent love and friendliness towards the poor heathen woman. From such ancestors was the man descended in whom all the nature of Israel was to find its royal concentration and fullest expression" (*Auberlen*). But there is also a Messianic trait in the fact that Ruth, a heathen woman, of a nation so hostile to the Israelites as that of Moab was, should have been thought worthy to be made the tribe-mother of the great and pious king David, on account of her faithful love to the people of Israel, and her entire confidence in Jehovah, the God of Israel. As Judah begat Perez from Tamar the Canaanitish woman (Gen. xxxviii.), and as Rahab was adopted into the congregation of Israel (Josh. vi. 25), and according to ancient tradition was married to Salmon (Matt. i. 5), so the Moabitess Ruth was taken by Boaz as his wife, and incorporated in the family of Judah, from which Christ was to spring according to the flesh (see Matt. i. 3, 5, where these three women are distinctly mentioned by name in the genealogy of Jesus).

The incidents described in the book fall within the times of the judges (chap. i. 1), and most probably in the time of Gideon (see at chap. i. 1); and the book itself forms both a supplement to the book of Judges and an introduction to the books of Samuel, which give no account of the ancestors of David. So far as its contents are concerned it has its proper place, in the Septuagint, the Vulgate, the Lutheran and other versions, between the book of Judges

and those of Samuel. In the Hebrew Codex, on the contrary, it is placed among the *hagiographa*, and in the Talmud (*baba bathr. f.* 14*b*) it is even placed at the head of them before the Psalms; whilst in the Hebrew MSS. it stands among the five *megilloth*: *Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther*. The latter position is connected with the liturgical use of the book in the synagogue, where it was read at the feast of weeks; whilst its place among the hagiographa is to be explained from the principle upon which the general arrangement of the Old Testament canon was founded,—namely, that the different books were divided into three classes according to the relation in which their authors stood to God and to the theocracy, and the books themselves in their contents and spirit to the divine revelation (see *Keil*, Lehrbuch der Einleitung, § 155). The latter is therefore to be regarded as the original classification, and not the one in the Septuagint rendering, where the original arrangement has unquestionably been altered in the case of this and other books, just because this principle has been overlooked.[1]

[1] Many critics of the present day, indeed, appeal to the testimony of Josephus and the earlier fathers as favouring the opposite view, viz. that the book of Ruth was originally placed at the close of the book of Judges, to which it formed an appendix. *Josephus* (c. Ap. i. 8) reckons, as is well known, only twenty-two books of the Old Testament; and the only way by which this number can be obtained is by joining together the books of Judges and Ruth, so as to form one book. Again, *Melito* of *Sardes*, who lived in the second century, and took a journey into Palestine for the purpose of obtaining correct information concerning the sacred writings of the Jews (πόσα τὸν ἀριθμὸν καὶ ὁποῖα τὴν τάξιν εἶεν), places Ruth after Judges in the list which has been preserved by *Eusebius* (*h. e.* iv. 26), but does not give the number of the books, as *Bertheau* erroneously maintains, nor observes that "Judges and Ruth form one book under the name of *Shofetim*." This is first done by *Origen* in his list as given by *Eusebius* (*h. e.* vi. 25), where he states that the Hebrews had twenty-two ἐνδιαθήκους βίβλους, and then adds in the case of Ruth, παρ' αὐτοῖς ἐν ἑνὶ Σωφετὶμ. Ruth occupies the same place in the lists of the later Greek fathers, as in *Rufinus* (Expos. in Symb. Apost.) and *Jerome* (in Prolog. Gal.), the latter of whom makes this remark on the book of Judges, *Et in eundem compingunt Ruth, quia in diebus Judicum facta ejus narratur historia;* and after enumerating the twenty-two books of the Old Testament, adds, *Quanquam nonnulli Ruth et Kinoth inter Hagiographa scriptitent et hos libros in suo putent numero supputandos*, etc. But all these testimonies prove nothing more than that the Hellenistic Jews, who made use of the Old Testament in the Greek rendering of the LXX., regarded the book of Ruth as an appendix of the book of Judges, and not that the book of Ruth ever followed the book of Judges in the Hebrew canon, so as to form one book. The reduction of the sacred writings of the Old Testament to twenty-two is nothing more than the product of the cabbalistic and mystical numbers wrought out by the Hellenistic or Alexandrian Jews. If this numbering had been the original

The book of Ruth is not a mere (say a third) appendix to the book of Judges, but a small independent work, which does indeed resemble the two appendices of the book of Judges, so far as the incidents recorded in it fall within the period of the Judges, and are not depicted in the spirit of the prophetic view of history; but, on the other hand, it has a thoroughly distinctive character both in form and contents, and has nothing in common with the book of Judges either in style or language: on the contrary, it differs essentially both in substance and design from the substance and design of this book and of its two appendices, for the simple reason that at the close of the history (chap. iv. 17), where Obed, the son

one, the Hebrew Jews would never have increased the number to twenty-four, since the Hebrew alphabet never contained twenty-four letters. *Josephus*, however, is not a witness with regard to the orthodox opinions of the Hebrew Jews, but was an eclectic and a Hellenist, who used the Old Testament in the Septuagint version and not in the original text, and who arranged the books of the Old Testament in the most singular manner. The fathers, too, with the exception of *Jerome*, whenever they give any account of their inquiries among the Jews with regard to the number and order of the books accepted by them as canonical, never give them in either the order or number found in the Hebrew canon, but simply according to the Septuagint version, which was the only one that the Christians understood. This is obvious in the case of *Melito*, from the fact that he reckons Βασιλειῶν τέσσαρα and Παραλειπομένων δύο, and places *Daniel* between the twelve minor prophets and Ezekiel. We find the same in *Origen*, although he gives the Hebrew names to the different books, and states in connection with the four books of Kings and the two books of *Paralipomena*, that the Hebrews named and numbered them differently. Lastly, it is true that *Jerome* arranges the writings of the Old Testament in his Prol. Gal. according to the three classes of the Hebrew canon; but he endeavours to bring the Hebrew mode of division and enumeration as much as possible into harmony with the Septuagint numbering and order as generally adopted in the Christian Church, and to conceal all existing differences. You may see this very clearly from his remarks as to the number of these books, and especially from the words, *Porro quinque litteræ duplices apud Hebræos sunt, Caph, Mem, Nun, Pe, Sade . . . . Unde et quinque a plerisque libri duplices existimantur, Samuel, Melachim, Dibre Hajamim, Esdras, Jeremias cum Kinoth, i.e. Lamentationibus suis.* For the *plerique* who adopt two books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles, are not Hebrew but Hellenistic Jews, as the Hebrew Jews did not divide these writings in their canon into two books each, but this mode of dividing them was first introduced into the Hebrew Bibles by *Dan. Bomberg* from the *Septuagint* or *Vulgate*. The further remark of this father, *quanquam nonnulli Ruth et Kinoth inter hagiographa scriptitent*, etc., is also to be estimated in the same way, and the word *nonnulli* to be attributed to the conciliatory efforts of Jerome. And lastly, his remark concerning the connection between the book of Ruth and that of Judges is not to be regarded as any evidence of the position which this book occupied in the Hebrew canon, but simply as a proof of the place assigned it by the Hellenistic Jews.

of Boaz and Ruth, is described as the grandfather of David, and still more clearly in the genealogy of Perez, which is brought down to David (chap. iv. 18–22), the book passes beyond the times of the Judges. In this simple fact the author very plainly shows that his intention was not to give a picture of the family life of pious Israelites in the time of the judges from a civil and a religious point of view, but rather to give a biographical sketch of the pious ancestors of David the king.

The *origin* of the book of Ruth is involved in obscurity. From its contents, and more especially from the object so apparent in the close of the book, it may be inferred with certainty that it was not written earlier than the time of David's rule over Israel, and indeed not before the culminating point of the reign of this great king. There would therefore be an interval of 150 to 180 years between the events themselves and the writing of the book, during which time the custom mentioned in chap. iv. 7, of taking off the shoe in acts of trade and barter, which formerly existed in Israel, may have fallen entirely into disuse, so that the author might think it necessary to explain the custom for the information of his contemporaries. We have not sufficient ground for fixing a later date, say the time of the captivity; and there is no force in the arguments that have been adduced in support of this (see my Lehrb. der Einl. § 137). The discovery that words and phrases such as מַרְגְּלוֹת (chap. iii. 7, 8, 14), פָּרַשׂ כְּנָפַיִם (chap. iii. 9), מִקְרֶה, chance (chap. ii. 3), either do not occur at all or only very rarely in the earlier writings, simply because the thing itself to which they refer is not mentioned, does not in the least degree prove that these words were not formed till a later age. The supposed Chaldaisms, however,—namely the forms תַּעֲבוּרִי and תִּדְבָּקִין (chap. ii. 8, 21), יִקְצֹרוּן (chap. ii. 9), שַׂמְתִּי, יָרַדְתִּי, שָׁכַבְתִּי (chap. iii. 3, 4), מָרָא for מָרָה (chap. i. 20), or the use of לָהֵן, and of the ἅπ. λεγ. עָגַן (chap. i. 13), etc.,—we only meet with in the speeches of the persons acting, and never where the author himself is narrating; and consequently they furnish no proofs of the later origin of the book, but may be simply and fully explained from the fact, that the author received these forms and words from the language used in common conversation in the time of the judges, and has faithfully recorded them. We are rather warranted in drawing the conclusion from this, that he did not derive the contents of his work from oral tradition, but made use of written documents, with regard to the origin and nature of which, however, nothing certain can be determined.

## EXPOSITION.

### RUTH GOES WITH NAOMI TO BETHLEHEM.—CHAP. I.

In the time of the judges Elimelech emigrated from Bethlehem in Judah into the land of Moab, along with his wife Naomi, and his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, because of a famine in the land (vers. 1, 2). There Elimelech died; and his two sons married Moabitish women, named Orpah and Ruth. But in the course of ten years they also died, so that Naomi and her two daughters-in-law were left by themselves (vers. 3–5). When Naomi heard that the Lord had once more blessed the land of Israel with bread, she set out with Orpah and Ruth to return home. But on the way she entreated them to turn back and remain with their relations in their own land; and Orpah did so (vers. 6–14). But Ruth declared that she would not leave her mother-in-law, and went with her to Bethlehem (vers. 15–22).

Vers. 1–5. *Elimelech's Emigration* (vers. 1, 2).—By the word וַיְהִי the following account is attached to other well-known events (see at Josh. i. 1); and by the definite statement, "*in the days when judges judged*," it is assigned to the period of the judges generally. "*A famine in the land*," *i.e.* in the land of Israel, and not merely in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem. The time of this famine cannot be determined with certainty, although it seems very natural to connect it, as *Seb. Schmidt* and others do, with the devastation of the land by the Midianites (Judg. vi.); and there are several *things* which favour this. For example, the famine must have been a very serious one, and not only have extended over the whole of the land of Israel, but have lasted several years, since it compelled Elimelech to emigrate into the land of the Moabites; and it was not till ten years had elapsed, that his wife Naomi, who survived him, heard that Jehovah had given His people bread again, and returned to her native land (vers. 4, 5). Now the Midianites oppressed Israel for seven years, and their invasions were generally attended by a destruction of the produce of the soil (Judg. vi. 3, 4), from which famine must necessarily have ensued. Moreover, they extended their devastations as far as Gaza (Judg. vi. 4). And although it by no means follows with certainty from this, that they also came into the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, it is still less possible to draw the opposite conclusion, as *Bertheau* does, from the fact they en-

camped in the valley of Jezreel (Judg. vi. 33), and were defeated there by Gideon, namely, that they did not devastate the mountains of Judah, because the road from the plain of Jezreel to Gaza did not lie across those mountains. There is just as little force in the other objection raised by *Bertheau*, namely, that the genealogical list in chap. iv. 18 sqq. would not place Boaz in the time of Gideon, but about the time of the Philistian supremacy over Israel, since this objection is founded partly upon an assumption that cannot be established, and partly upon an erroneous chronological calculation. For example, the assumption that every member is included in this chronological series cannot be established, inasmuch as unimportant members are often omitted from the genealogies, so that Obed the son of Boaz might very well have been the grandfather of Jesse. And according to the true chronological reckoning, the birth of David, who died in the year 1015 B.C. at the age of seventy, fell in the year 1085, *i.e.* nine or ten years after the victory gained by Samuel over the Philistines, or after the termination of their forty years' rule over Israel, and only ninety-seven years after the death of Gideon (see the chronological table, p. 289). Now David was the youngest of the eight sons of Jesse. If therefore we place his birth in the fiftieth year of his father's life, Jesse would have been born in the first year of the Philistian oppression, or forty-eight years after the death of Gideon. Now it is quite possible that Jesse may also have been a younger son of Obed, and born in the fiftieth year of his father's life; and if so, the birth of Obed would fall in the last years of Gideon. From this at any rate so much may be concluded with certainty, that Boaz was a contemporary of Gideon, and the emigration of Elimelech into the land of Moab may have taken place in the time of the Midianitish oppression. "*To sojourn in the fields of Moab*," *i.e.* to live as a stranger there. The form שְׂדֵי (vers. 1, 2, 22, and chap. ii. 6) is not the construct state singular, or only another form for שָׂדֶה, as *Bertheau* maintains, but the construct state plural of the absolute שָׂדִים, which does not occur anywhere, it is true, but would be a perfectly regular formation (comp. Isa. xxxii. 12, 2 Sam. i. 21, etc.), as the construct state singular is written שְׂדֵה even in this book (ver. 6 and chap. iv. 3). The use of the singular in these passages for the land of the Moabites by no means proves that שְׂדֵי must also be a singular, but may be explained from the fact that the expression "the field (= the territory) of Moab" alternates with the plural, "the fields of Moab."—Vers. 2, 3. אֶפְרָתִים, the plural of אֶפְרָתִי, an adjective

formation, not from אֶפְרַיִם, as in Judg. xii. 5, but from אֶפְרָת (Gen. xlviii. 7) or אֶפְרָתָה (chap. iv. 11, Gen. xxxv. 19), the old name for Bethlehem, *Ephrathite, i.e.* sprung from Bethlehem, as in 1 Sam. xvii. 12. The names—*Elimelech, i.e.* to whom God is King; *Naomi* (נְעֳמִי, a contraction of נַעֲמִית, LXX. *Νοομμεΐν*, *Vulg. Noëmi*), *i.e.* the gracious; *Machlon, i.e.* the weakly; and *Chilion*, pining—are genuine Hebrew names; whereas the names of the Moabitish women, *Orpah* and *Ruth*, who were married to Elimelech's sons, cannot be satisfactorily explained from the Hebrew, as the meaning given to *Orpah*, "turning the back," is very arbitrary, and the derivation of *Ruth* from רֵעוּת, a friend, is quite uncertain. According to chap. iv. 10, Ruth was the wife of the elder son Mahlon. Marriage with daughters of the Moabites was not forbidden in the law, like marriages with Canaanitish women (Deut. vii. 3); it was only the reception of Moabites into the congregation of the Lord that was forbidden (Deut. xxiii. 4).—Ver. 5. "*Thus the woman* (Naomi) *remained left* (alone) *of her two sons and her husband.*"

Vers. 6–14. After the loss of her husband and her two sons, Naomi rose up out of the fields of Moab to return into the land of Judah, as she had heard that Jehovah had visited His people, *i.e.* had turned His favour towards them again to give them bread. From the place where she had lived Naomi went forth, along with her two daughters-in-law. These three went on the way to return to the land of Judah. The expression "to return," if taken strictly, only applies to Naomi, who really *returned* to Judah, whilst her daughters-in-law simply wished to accompany her thither.—Vers. 8 sqq. "*On the way*," *i.e.* when they had gone a part of the way, Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, "*Go, return each one to her mother's house*,"—not her father's, though, according to chap. ii. 11, Ruth's father at any rate was still living, but her mother's, because maternal love knows best how to comfort a daughter in her affliction. "*Jehovah grant you that ye may find a resting-place, each one in the house of her husband*," *i.e.* that ye may both be happily married again. She then kissed them, to take leave of them (*vid.* Gen. xxxi. 28). The daughters-in-law, however, began to weep aloud, and said, "*We will return with thee to thy people*." כִּי before a direct statement serves to strengthen it, and is almost equivalent to a positive assurance.—Ver. 11. Naomi endeavoured to dissuade them from this resolution, by setting before them the fact, that if they went with her, there would be no hope of their being married again, and enjoying the pleasures of life once more. "*Have I yet sons in my womb, that they may be your hus-*

*bands?*" Her meaning is: I am not pregnant with sons, upon whom, as the younger brothers of Mahlon and Chilion, there would rest the obligation of marrying you, according to the Levirate law (Deut. xxv. 5; Gen. xxxviii. 8). And not only have I no such hope as this, but, continues Naomi, in vers. 12, 13, I have no prospect of having a husband and being blessed with children: "*for I am too old to have a husband;*" yea, even if I could think of this altogether improbable thing as taking place, and assume the impossible as possible; "*if I should say, I have hope* (of having a husband), *yea, if I should have a husband to-night, and should even bear sons, would ye then wait till they were grown, would ye then abstain from having husbands?*" The כִּי (*if*) before אָמַרְתִּי refers to both the perfects which follow. לָהֶן is the third pers. plur. neuter suffix הֶן with the prefix לְ, as in Job xxx. 24, where הֶן is pointed with seghol, on account of the toned syllable which follows, as here in pause in ver. 9: *lit.* in these things, in that case, and hence in the sense of *therefore* = לָכֵן, as in Chaldee (*e.g.* Dan. ii. 6, 9, 24, etc.). תֵּעָג�used (*vid.* Isa. lx. 4, and *Ewald*, § 195, *a.*), from עָגַן *àπ. λεγ.* in Hebrew, which signifies in Aramæan to hold back, shut in; hence in the Talmud עֲגוּנָה, a woman who lived retired in her own house without a husband. Naomi supposes three cases in ver. 12, of which each is more improbable, or rather more impossible, than the one before; and even if the impossible circumstance should be possible, that she should bear sons that very night, she could not in that case expect or advise her daughters-in-law to wait till these sons were grown up and could marry them, according to the Levirate law. In this there was involved the strongest persuasion to her daughters-in-law to give up their intention of going with her into the land of Judah, and a most urgent appeal to return to their mothers' houses, where, as young widows without children, they would not be altogether without the prospect of marrying again. One possible case Naomi left without notice, namely, that her daughters-in-law might be able to obtain other husbands in Judah itself. She did not hint at this, in the first place, and perhaps chiefly, from delicacy on account of the Moabitish descent of her daughters-in-law, in which she saw that there would be an obstacle to their being married in the land of Judah; and secondly, because Naomi could not do anything herself to bring about such a connection, and wished to confine herself therefore to the one point, of making it clear to her daughters that in her present state it was altogether out of her power to provide connubial and domestic happiness for them in the land of Judah.

She therefore merely fixed her mind upon the different possibilities of a Levirate marriage.[1] אַל בְּנֹתַי, "*not my daughters*," *i.e.* do not go with me; "*for it has gone much more bitterly with me than with you.*" מְרַר relates to her mournful lot. מִכֶּם is comparative, "before you;" not "it grieveth me much on your account," for which עֲלֵיכֶם would be used, as in 2 Sam. i. 26. Moreover, this thought would not be in harmony with the following clause: "for the hand of the Lord has gone out against me," *i.e.* the Lord has sorely smitten me, namely by taking away not only my husband, but also my two sons.—Ver. 14. At these dissuasive words the daughters-in-law broke out into loud weeping again (תִּשֶּׂנָה with the א dropped for תִּשֶּׂאנָה, ver. 9), and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, and took leave of her to return to her mother's house; but Ruth clung to her (דָּבַק as in Gen. ii. 24), forsaking her father and mother to go with Naomi into the land of Judah (*vid.* chap. ii. 11).

Vers. 15–22. To the repeated entreaty of Naomi that she would follow her sister-in-law and return to her people and her God, Ruth replied: "*Entreat me not to leave thee, and to return away behind thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou stayest, I will stay; thy people is my people, and thy God my God! where thou diest, I will die, and there will I be buried. Jehovah do so to me, and*

[1] The objections raised by *J. B. Carpzov* against explaining vers. 12 and 13 as referring to a Levirate marriage,—namely, that this is not to be thought of, because a Levirate marriage was simply binding upon brothers of the deceased by the same father and mother, and upon brothers who were living when he died, and not upon those born afterwards,—have been overthrown by *Bertheau* as being partly without foundation, and partly beside the mark. In the first place, the law relating to the Levirate marriage speaks only of brothers of the deceased, by which, according to the design of this institution, we must certainly think of sons by one father, but not necessarily of sons by the same mother. Secondly, the law does indeed expressly require marriage with the sister-in-law only of a brother who should be in existence when her husband died, but it does not distinctly exclude a brother born afterwards; and this is the more evident from the fact that, according to the account in Gen. xxxviii. 11, this duty was binding upon brothers who were not grown up at the time, as soon as they should be old enough to marry. Lastly, Naomi merely says, in ver. 12*a*, that she was not with child by her deceased husband; and when she does take into consideration, in vers. 12*b* and 13, the possibility of a future pregnancy, she might even then be simply thinking of an alliance with some brother of her deceased husband, and therefore of sons who would legally be regarded as sons of Elimelech. When *Carpzov* therefore defines the meaning of her words in this manner, "I have indeed no more children to hope for, to whom I could marry you in time, and I have no command over others," the first thought does not exhaust the meaning of the words, and the last is altogether foreign to the text.

*more also* (*lit.* and so may He add to do)! *Death alone shall divide between me and thee.*" The words כֹּה יַעֲשֶׂה יי . . . יוֹסִיף are a frequently recurring formula in connection with an oath (cf. 1 Sam. iii. 17, xiv. 44, xx. 13, etc.), by which the person swearing called down upon himself a severe punishment in case he should not keep his word or carry out his resolution. The following כִּי is not a particle used in swearing instead of אִם in the sense of "if," equivalent to "surely not," as in 1 Sam. xx. 12, in the oath which precedes the formula, but answers to ὅτι in the sense of *quod* introducing the declaration, as in Gen. xxii. 16, 1 Sam. xx. 13, 1 Kings ii. 23, 2 Kings iii. 14, etc., signifying, I swear that death, and nothing else than death, shall separate us. Naomi was certainly serious in her intentions, and sincere in the advice which she gave to Ruth, and did not speak in this way merely to try her and put the state of her heart to the proof, "that it might be made manifest whether she would adhere stedfastly to the God of Israel and to herself, despising temporal things and the hope of temporal possessions" (*Seb. Schmidt*). She had simply the earthly prosperity of her daughter-in-law in her mind, as she herself had been shaken in her faith in the wonderful ways and gracious guidance of the faithful covenant God by the bitter experience of her own life.[1] With Ruth, however, it was evidently not merely strong affection and attachment by which she felt herself so drawn to her mother-in-law that she wished to live and die with her, but a leaning of her heart towards the God of Israel and His laws, of which she herself was probably not yet fully conscious, but which she had acquired so strongly in her conjugal relation and her intercourse with her Israelitish connections, that it was her earnest wish never to be separated from this people and its God (cf. chap. ii. 11).—Ver. 18. As she insisted strongly upon going with her (הִתְאַמֵּץ, to stiffen one's self firmly upon a thing), Naomi gave up persuading her any more to return.—Ver. 19. So they two went until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived, the whole town was in commotion on their account (תֵּהֹם, imperf. *Niph.* of הוּם, as in 1 Sam. iv. 5, 1 Kings i. 45). They said, "*Is this Naomi?*" The subject to תֹּאמַרְנָה is the inhabitants of the town, but chiefly the female portion

[1] "She thought of earthly things alone; and as at that time the Jews almost universally were growing lax in the worship of God, so she, having spent ten years among the Moabites, thought it of little consequence whether they adhered to the religion of their fathers, to which they had been accustomed from their infancy, or went over to the Jewish religion."—*Carpzov.*

of the inhabitants, who were the most excited at Naomi's return. This is the simplest way of explaining the use of the feminine in the verbs תֹּאמַרְנָה and תִּקְרֶאנָה. In these words there was an expression of amazement, not so much at the fact that Naomi was still alive, and had come back again, as at her returning in so mournful a condition, as a solitary widow, without either husband or sons; for she replied (ver. 20), "*Call me not Naomi* (*i.e.* gracious), *but Marah*" (the bitter one), *i.e.* one who has experienced bitterness, "*for the Almighty has made it very bitter to me. I, I went away full, and Jehovah has made me come back again empty. Why do ye call me Naomi, since Jehovah testifies against me, and the Almighty has afflicted me?*" "*Full*," *i.e.* rich, not in money and property, but in the possession of a husband and two sons; a rich mother, but now deprived of all that makes a mother's heart rich, bereft of both husband and sons. "*Testified against me*," by word and deed (as in Ex. xx. 16, 2 Sam. i. 16). The rendering "*He hath humbled me*" (LXX., *Vulg.*, *Bertheau*, etc.) is incorrect, as עָנָה with בְּ and the construct state simply means to trouble one's self with anything (Eccl. i. 13), which is altogether unsuitable here.—With ver. 22 the account of the return of Naomi and her daughter-in-law is brought to a close, and the statement that "*they came to Bethlehem in the time of the barley harvest*" opens at the same time the way for the further course of the history. הַשָּׁבָה is pointed as a third pers. perf. with the article in a relative sense, as in chap. ii. 6 and iv. 3. Here and at chap. ii. 6 it applies to Ruth; but in chap. iv. 3 to Naomi. הֻמָּה, the masculine, is used here, as it frequently is, for the feminine הֵנָּה, as being the more common gender. The harvest, as a whole, commenced with the barley harvest (see at Lev. xxiii. 10, 11).

### RUTH GLEANS IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ.—CHAP. II.

Ruth went to the field to glean ears of corn, for the purpose of procuring support for herself and her mother-in-law, and came by chance to the field of Boaz, a relative of Naomi, who, when he heard that she had come with Naomi from Moabitis, spoke kindly to her, and gave her permission not only to glean ears in his field and even among the sheaves, but to appease her hunger and thirst with the food and drink of his reapers (vers. 1–16), so that in the evening she returned to her mother-in-law with a plentiful gleaning, and told her of the gracious reception she had met with from

this man, and then learned from her that Boaz was a relation of her own (vers. 17–23).

Vers. 1–7. The account of this occurrence commences with a statement which was necessary in order to make it perfectly intelligible, namely that Boaz, to whose field Ruth went to glean, was a relative of Naomi through her deceased husband Elimelech. The *Kethibh* מידע is to be read מְיֻדָּע, an acquaintance (cf. Ps. xxxi. 12, lv. 14). The *Keri* מוֹדַע is the construct state of מוֹדָע, *lit.* acquaintanceship, then an acquaintance or friend (Prov. vii. 4), for which מוֹדַעַת occurs afterwards in chap. iii. 2 with the same meaning. That the acquaintance or friend of Naomi through her husband was also a relation, is evident from the fact that he was "of the family of Elimelech." According to the rabbinical tradition, which is not well established however, Boaz was a nephew of Elimelech. The לְ before אִישָׁהּ is used instead of the simple construct state, because the reference is not to *the* relation, but to *a* relation of her husband; at the same time, the word מוֹדַע has taken the form of the construct state notwithstanding this לְ (compare *Ewald*, § 292, *a.*, with § 289, *b.*). גִּבּוֹר חַיִל generally means the brave man of war (Judg. vi. 12, xi. 1, etc.); but here it signifies a man of property. The name *Boaz* is not formed from בּוֹ עֹז, in whom is strength, but from a root, בָּעַז, which does not occur in Hebrew, and signifies *alacrity*.—Vers. 2, 3. Ruth wished to go to the field and glean at (among) the ears, *i.e.* whatever ears were left lying upon the harvest field (cf. ver. 7), אַחַר אֲשֶׁר, behind him in whose eyes she should find favour. The Mosaic law (Lev. xix. 9, xxiii. 22, compared with Deut. xxiv. 19) did indeed expressly secure to the poor the right to glean in the harvest fields, and prohibited the owners from gleaning themselves; but hard-hearted farmers and reapers threw obstacles in the way of the poor, and even forbade their gleaning altogether. Hence Ruth proposed to glean after him who should generously allow it. She carried out this intention with the consent of Naomi, and chance led her to the portion of the field belonging to Boaz, a relation of Elimelech, without her knowing the owner of the field, or being at all aware of his connection with Elimelech. וַיִּקֶר מִקְרֶהָ, *lit.* "*her chance chanced to hit upon the field.*" —Vers. 4 sqq. When Boaz came from the town to the field, and had greeted his reapers with the blessing of a genuine Israelite, "*Jehovah be with you,*" and had received from them a corresponding greeting in return, he said to the overseer of the reapers, "*Whose damsel is this?*" to which he replied, "*It is the Moabitish damsel who*

*came back with Naomi from the fields of Moab, and she has said* (asked), *Pray, I will glean* (*i.e.* pray allow me to glean) *and gather among the sheaves after the reapers, and has come and stays* (here) *from morning till now; her sitting in the house that is little.*" מֵאָז, *lit.* a conjunction, here used as a preposition, is stronger than מִן, "*from then*," from the time of the morning onwards (see *Ewald*, § 222, *c.*). It is evident from this answer of the servant who was placed over the reapers, (1) that Boaz did not prohibit any poor person from gleaning in his field; (2) that Ruth asked permission of the overseer of the reapers, and availed herself of this permission with untiring zeal from the first thing in the morning, that she might get the necessary support for her mother-in-law and herself; and (3) that her history was well known to the overseer, and also to Boaz, although Boaz saw her now for the first time.

Vers. 8–16. The good report which the overlooker gave of the modesty and diligence of Ruth could only strengthen Boaz in his purpose, which he had probably already formed from his affection as a relation towards Naomi, to make the acquaintance of her daughter-in-law, and speak kindly to her. With fatherly kindness, therefore, he said to her (vers. 8, 9), "*Dost thou hear, my daughter?* (*i.e.* 'thou hearest, dost thou not?' *interrogatio blande affirmat;*) *go not to reap in another field, and go not away from here, and keep so to my maidens* (*i.e.* remaining near them in the field). *Thine eyes* (directed) *upon the field which they reap, go behind them* (*i.e.* behind the maidens, who probably tied up the sheaves, whilst the men-servants cut the corn). *I have commanded the young men not to touch thee* (to do thee no harm); *and if thou art thirsty* (צָמִת, from צָמָה = צָמֵא: see *Ewald*, § 195, *b.*), *go to the vessels, and drink of what the servants draw.*"—Ver. 10. Deeply affected by this generosity, Ruth fell upon her face, bowing down to the ground (as in 1 Sam. xxv. 23, 2 Sam. i. 2; cf. Gen. xxiii. 7), to thank him reverentially, and said to Boaz, "*Why have I found favour in thine eyes, that thou regardest me, who am only a stranger?*" הַכִּיר, to look at with sympathy or care, to receive a person kindly (cf. ver. 19).—Vers. 11, 12. Boaz replied, "*Everything has been told me that thou hast done to* (אֵת, prep. as in Zech. vii. 9, 2 Sam. xvi. 17) *thy mother-in-law since the death of thy husband, that thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and thy kindred, and hast come to a people that thou knewest not heretofore*" (hast therefore done what God commanded Abraham to do, Gen. xii. 1). "*The Lord recompense thy work, and let thy reward be perfect* (recalling Gen. xv. 1) *from*

*the Lord the God of Israel, to whom thou hast come to seek refuge under His wings!*" For this figurative expression, which is derived from Deut. xxxii. 11, compare Ps. xci. 4, xxxvi. 8, lvii. 2. In these words of Boaz we see the genuine piety of a true Israelite. —Ver. 13. Ruth replied with true humility, "*May I find favour in thine eyes; for thou hast comforted me, and spoken to the heart of thy maiden* (see Judg. xix. 3), *though I am not like one of thy maidens*," *i.e.* though I stand in no such near relation to thee, as to have been able to earn thy favour. In this last clause she restricts the expression "thy maiden." *Carpzov* has rightly pointed this out: "But what am I saying when I call myself thy maiden? since I am not worthy to be compared to the least of thy maidens." The word אֶמְצָא is to be taken in an optative sense, as expressive of the wish that Boaz might continue towards her the kindness he had already expressed. To take it as a present, "I find favour" (*Clericus* and *Bertheau*), does not tally with the modesty and humility shown by Ruth in the following words.—Ver. 14. This unassuming humility on the part of Ruth made Boaz all the more favourably disposed towards her, so that at meal-time he called her to eat along with his people (לָהּ without *Mappik*, as in Num. xxxii. 42, Zech. v. 11; cf. *Ewald*, § 94, *b.* 3). "*Dip thy morsel in the vinegar.*" *Chomez*, a sour beverage composed of vinegar (wine vinegar or sour wine) mixed with oil; a very refreshing drink, which is still a favourite beverage in the East (see *Rosenmüller*, A. and N. Morgenland, iv. p. 68, and my Bibl. Archäologie, ii. p. 16). "*And he reached her parched corn.*" The subject is Boaz, who, judging from the expression "come hither," either joined in the meal, or at any rate was present at it. קָלִי are roasted grains of wheat (see at Lev. ii. 14, and my Bibl. Arch. ii. p. 14), which are still eaten by the reapers upon the harvest field, and also handed to strangers.[1] Boaz gave her an abundant supply of it, so that she was not only satisfied, but left some, and was able to take it home to her mother (ver. 18).—Vers. 15, 16. When she rose up to glean again after eating, Boaz commanded his people, saying, "*She may*

[1] Thus *Robinson* (Pal. ii. p. 394) gives the following description of a harvest scene in the neighbourhood of Kubeibeh: "In one field nearly two hundred reapers and gleaners were at work, the latter being nearly as numerous as the former. A few were taking their refreshment, and offered us some of their 'parched corn.' In the season of harvest, the grains of wheat not yet fully dry and hard, are roasted in a pan or on an iron plate, and constitute a very palatable article of food; this is eaten along with bread, or instead of it."

*also glean between the sheaves* (which was not generally allowed), *and ye shall not shame her* (do her any injury, Judg. xviii. 7); *and ye shall also draw out of the bundles for her, and let them lie* (the ears drawn out), *that she may glean them, and shall not scold her,*" *sc.* for picking up the ears that have been drawn out. These directions of Boaz went far beyond the bounds of generosity and compassion for the poor; and show that he felt a peculiar interest in Ruth, with whose circumstances he was well acquainted, and who had won his heart by her humility, her faithful attachment to her mother-in-law, and her love to the God of Israel,—a fact important to notice in connection with the further course of the history.

Vers. 17–23. Thus Ruth gleaned till the evening in the field; and when she knocked out the ears, she had about an ephah (about 20–25 lbs.) of barley.—Ver. 18. This she brought to her mother-in-law in the city, and "*drew out* (*sc.* from her pocket, as the Chaldee has correctly supplied) *what she had left from her sufficiency,*" *i.e.* of the parched corn which Boaz had reached her (ver. 14).—Ver. 19. The mother inquired, "*Where hast thou gleaned to-day, and where wroughtest thou?*" and praised the benefactor, who, as she conjectured from the quantity of barley collected and the food brought home, had taken notice of Ruth: "*blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee!*" When she heard the name of the man, Boaz, she saw that this relative of her husband had been chosen by God to be a benefactor of herself and Ruth, and exclaimed, "*Blessed be he of the Lord, that he has not left off* (withdrawn) *his favour towards the living and the dead!*" On עָזַב חַסְדּוֹ see Gen. xxiv. 27. This verb is construed with a double accusative here; for אֵת cannot be a preposition, as in that case מֵאֵת would be used like מֵעִם in Gen. *l.c.* "*The living,*" etc., forms a second object: as regards (with regard to) the living and the dead, in which Naomi thought of herself and Ruth, and of her husband and sons, to whom God still showed himself gracious, even after their death, through His care for their widows. In order to enlighten Ruth still further upon the matter, she added, "*The man* (Boaz) *is our relative, and one of our redeemers.*" He "*stands near to us,*" *sc.* by relationship. גֹּאֲלֵנוּ, a defective form for גֹּאֲלֵינוּ, which is found in several MSS. and editions. On the significance of the *goël,* or redeemer, see at Lev. xxv. 26, 48, 49, and the introduction to chap. iii.—Ver. 21. Ruth proceeded to inform her of his kindness: גַּם כִּי, "*also* (know) *that he said to me, Keep with my people, till the harvest is all ended.*" The masculine הַנְּעָרִים, for which we should rather expect the

feminine נְעָרוֹת in accordance with vers. 8, 22, 23, is quite in place as the more comprehensive gender, as a designation of the reapers generally, both male and female; and the expression לִי אֲשֶׁר in this connection in the sense of *my* is more exact than the possessive pronoun: the people who belong to my house, as distinguished from the people of other masters.—Ver. 22. Naomi declared herself fully satisfied with this, because Ruth would be thereby secured from insults, which she might receive when gleaning in strange fields. "*That they meet thee not*," *lit.* "that they do not fall upon thee." פָּגַע בְּ signifies to fall upon a person, to smite and ill-treat him.—Ver. 23. After this Ruth kept with the maidens of Boaz during the whole of the barley and wheat harvests gleaning ears of corn, and lived with her mother-in-law, *sc.* when she returned in the evening from the field. In this last remark there is a tacit allusion to the fact that a change took place for Ruth when the harvest was over.

### RUTH SEEKS FOR MARRIAGE WITH BOAZ.—CHAP. III.

After the harvest Naomi advised Ruth to visit Boaz on a certain night, and ask him to marry her as redeemer (vers. 1–5). Ruth followed this advice, and Boaz promised to fulfil her request, provided the nearer redeemer who was still living would not perform this duty (vers. 6–13), and sent her away in the morning with a present of wheat, that she might not return empty to her mother-in-law (vers. 14–18). To understand the advice which Naomi gave to Ruth, and which Ruth carried out, and in fact to form a correct idea of the further course of the history generally, we must bear in mind the legal relations which came into consideration here. According to the theocratical rights, Jehovah was the actual owner of the land which He had given to His people for an inheritance; and the Israelites themselves had merely the usufruct of the land which they received by lot for their inheritance, so that the existing possessor could not part with the family portion or sell it at his will, but it was to remain for ever in his family. When any one therefore was obliged to sell his inheritance on account of poverty, and actually did sell it, it was the duty of the nearest relation to redeem it as *goël*. But if it should not be redeemed, it came back, in the next year of jubilee, to its original owner or his heirs without compensation. Consequently no actual sale took place in our sense of the word, but simply a sale of the yearly produce till the year of

jubilee (see Lev. xxv. 10, 13–16, 24–28). There was also an old customary right, which had received the sanction of God, with certain limitations, through the Mosaic law,—namely, the custom of Levirate marriage, or the marriage of a brother-in-law, which we meet with as early as Gen. xxxviii., viz. that if an Israelite who had been married died without children, it was the duty of his brother to marry the widow, that is to say, his sister-in-law, that he might establish his brother's name in Israel, by begetting a son through his sister-in-law, who should take the name of the deceased brother, that his name might not become extinct in Israel. This son was then the legal heir of the landed property of the deceased uncle (cf. Deut. xxv. 5 sqq.). These two institutions are not connected together in the Mosaic law; nevertheless it was a very natural thing to place the Levirate duty in connection with the right of redemption. And this had become the traditional custom. Whereas the law merely imposed the obligation of marrying the childless widow upon the brother, and even allowed him to renounce the obligation if he would take upon himself the disgrace connected with such a refusal (see Deut. xxv. 7–10); according to chap. iv. 5 of this book it had become a traditional custom to require the Levirate marriage of the redeemer of the portion of the deceased relative, not only that the landed possession might be permanently retained in the family, but also that the family itself might not be suffered to die out.

In the case before us Elimelech had possessed a portion at Bethlehem, which Naomi had sold from poverty (chap. iv. 3); and Boaz, a relation of Elimelech, was the redeemer of whom Naomi hoped that he would fulfil the duty of a redeemer,—namely, that he would not only ransom the purchased field, but marry her daughter-in-law Ruth, the widow of the rightful heir of the landed possession of Elimelech, and thus through this marriage establish the name of her deceased husband or son (Elimelech or Mahlon) upon his inheritance. Led on by this hope, she advised Ruth to visit Boaz, who had shown himself so kind and well-disposed towards her, during the night, and by a species of bold artifice, which she assumed that he would not resist, to induce him as redeemer to grant to Ruth this Levirate marriage. The reason why she adopted this plan for the accomplishment of her wishes, and did not appeal to Boaz directly, or ask him to perform this duty of affection to her deceased husband, was probably that she was afraid lest she should fail to attain her end in this way, partly because the duty of

a Levirate marriage was not legally binding upon the redeemer, and partly because Boaz was not so closely related to her husband that she could justly require this of him, whilst there was actually a nearer redeemer than he (chap. iii. 12). According to our customs, indeed, this act of Naomi and Ruth appears a very objectionable one from a moral point of view, but it was not so when judged by the customs of the people of Israel at that time. Boaz, who was an honourable man, and, according to chap. iii. 10, no doubt somewhat advanced in years, praised Ruth for having taken refuge with him, and promised to fulfil her wishes when he had satisfied himself that the nearer redeemer would renounce his right and duty (chap. iii. 10, 11). As he acknowledged by this very declaration, that under certain circumstances it would be his duty as redeemer to marry Ruth, he took no offence at the manner in which she had approached him and proposed to become his wife. On the contrary, he regarded it as a proof of feminine virtue and modesty, that she had not gone after young men, but offered herself as a wife to an old man like him. This conduct on the part of Boaz is a sufficient proof that women might have confidence in him that he would do nothing unseemly. And he justified such confidence. "The modest man," as *Bertheau* observes, "even in the middle of the night did not hesitate for a moment what it was his duty to do with regard to the young maiden (or rather woman) towards whom he felt already so strongly attached; he made his own personal inclinations subordinate to the traditional custom, and only when this permitted him to marry Ruth was he ready to do so. And not knowing whether she might not have to become the wife of the nearer *goël*, he was careful for her and her reputation, in order that he might hand her over unblemished to the man who had the undoubted right to claim her as his wife."

Vers. 1–5. As Naomi conjectured, from the favour which Boaz had shown to Ruth, that he might not be disinclined to marry her as *goël*, she said to her daughter-in-law, "*My daughter, I must seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee.*" In the question הֲלֹא אֲבַקֶּשׁ, the word הֲלֹא is here, as usual, an expression of general admission or of undoubted certainty, in the sense of "Is it not true, I seek for thee? it is my duty to seek for thee." מְנוּחָה = מָנוֹחַ (chap. i. 9) signifies the condition of a peaceful life, a peaceful and well-secured condition, "a secure life under the guardian care of a husband" (*Rosenmüller*). "*And now is not Boaz our relation, with whose maidens thou wast? Behold, he is winnowing the barley*

*floor* (barley on the threshing-floor) *to-night*," *i.e.* till late in the night, to avail himself of the cool wind, which rises towards evening (Gen. iii. 8), for the purpose of cleansing the corn. The threshing-floors of the Israelites were, and are still in Palestine, made under the open heaven, and were nothing more than level places in the field stamped quite hard.[1]—Vers. 3, 4. "*Wash and anoint thyself* (סְכִתְּ, from סוּךְ = נָסַךְ), *and put on thy clothes* (thy best clothes), *and go down* (from Bethlehem, which stood upon the ridge of a hill) *to the threshing-floor; let not thyself be noticed by the man* (Boaz) *till he has finished eating and drinking. And when he lies down, mark the place where he will sleep, and go* (when he has fallen asleep) *and uncover the place of his feet, and lay thyself down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do.*"—Ver. 5. Ruth promised to do this. The אֵלַי, which the Masorites have added to the text as *Keri non scriptum*, is quite unnecessary. From the account which follows of the carrying out of the advice given to her, we learn that Naomi had instructed Ruth to ask Boaz to marry her as her redeemer (cf. ver. 9).

Vers. 6–13. Ruth went accordingly to the threshing-floor and did as her mother-in-law had commanded; *i.e.* she noticed where Boaz went to lie down to sleep, and then, when he had eaten and drunken, and lay down cheerfully, at the end of the heap of sheaves or corn, and, as we may supply from the context, had fallen asleep, came to him quietly, uncovered the place of his feet, *i.e.* lifted up the covering over his feet, and lay down.—Ver. 8. About midnight the man was startled, namely, because on awaking he observed that there was some one lying at his feet; and he "bent himself" forward, or on one side, to feel who was lying there, "*and behold a woman was lying at his feet.*" מַרְגְּלֹתָיו is *accus. loci*.—Ver. 9. In answer to his inquiry, "*Who art thou?*" she said, "*I am Ruth, thine handmaid; spread thy wing over thine handmaid, for thou art a redeemer.*" כְּנָפֶךָ is a dual according to the Masoretic pointing, as we cannot look upon it as a pausal form on account of the position of the word, but it is most probably to be regarded as a singular; and the figurative expression is not taken from birds, which spread their wings over their young, *i.e.* to protect them, but refers, according to Deut. xxiii. 1, xxvii. 20, and Ezek. xvi. 8, to the wing, *i.e.* the corner of the counterpane, referring to the fact that a man

[1] "A level spot is selected for the threshing-floors, which are then constructed near each other, of a circular form, perhaps fifty feet in diameter, merely by beating down the earth hard."—*Robinson*, Pal. ii. p. 277.

spreads this over his wife as well as himself. Thus Ruth entreated Boaz to marry her because he was a redeemer. On this reason for the request, see the remarks in the introduction to the chapter.— Ver. 10. Boaz praised her conduct: "*Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter* (see chap. ii. 20); *thou hast made thy later love better than the earlier, that thou hast not gone after young men, whether poor or rich.*" Ruth's earlier or first love was the love she had shown to her deceased husband and her mother-in-law (comp. chap. ii. 11, where Boaz praises this love); the later love she had shown in the fact, that as a young widow she had not sought to win the affections of young men, as young women generally do, that she might have a youthful husband, but had turned trustfully to the older man, that he might find a successor to her deceased husband, through a marriage with him, in accordance with family custom (*vid.* chap. iv. 10). "*And now*," added Boaz (ver. 11), "*my daughter, fear not; for all that thou sayest I will do to thee: for the whole gate of my people* (*i.e.* all my city, the whole population of Bethlehem, who go in and out at the gate: see Gen. xxxiv. 24, Deut. xvii. 2) *knoweth that thou art a virtuous woman.*" Consequently Boaz saw nothing wrong in the fact that Ruth had come to him, but regarded her request that he would marry her as redeemer as perfectly natural and right, and was ready to carry out her wish as soon as the circumstances would legally allow it. He promised her this (vers. 12, 13), saying, "*And now truly I am a redeemer; but there is a nearer redeemer than I. Stay here this night* (or as it reads at the end of ver. 13, 'lie till the morning'), *and in the morning, if he will redeem thee, well, let him redeem; but if it does not please him to redeem thee, I will redeem thee, as truly as Jehovah liveth.*" כִּי אִם (*Kethibh*, ver. 12), after a strong assurance, as after the formula used in an oath, "*God do so to me*," etc., 2 Sam. iii. 35, xv. 21 (*Kethibh*), and 2 Kings v. 20, is to be explained from the use of this particle in the sense of *nisi*, except that, = only: "only I am redeemer," equivalent to, assuredly I am redeemer (cf. *Ewald*, § 356, *b.*). Consequently there is no reason whatever for removing the אִם from the text, as the Masorites have done (in the *Keri*).[1] Ruth was to lie till morning, because she could not easily return to

[1] What the כ *majusc.* in לֵינִי signifies, is uncertain. According to the smaller Masora, it was only found among the eastern (*i.e.* Palestinian) Jews. Consequently *Hiller* (in his Arcanum Keri et Ctibh, p. 163) conjectures that they used it to point out a various reading, viz. that לֵנִי should be the reading here. But this is hardly correct.

the city in the dark at midnight; but, as is shown in ver. 14, she did not stay till actual daybreak, but "*before one could know another, she rose up, and he said* (*i.e.* as Boaz had said), *It must not be known that the woman came to the threshing-floor.*" For this would have injured the reputation not only of Ruth, but also of Boaz himself.—Ver. 15. He then said, "Bring the cloak that thou hast on, and lay hold of it" (to hold it open), and measured for her six measures of barley into it as a present, that she might not go back empty to her mother-in-law (ver. 17). מִטְפַּחַת, here and Isa. iii. 22, is a broad upper garment, *pallium*, possibly only a large shawl. "As the cloaks worn by the ancients were so full, that one part was thrown upon the shoulder, and another gathered up under the arm, Ruth, by holding a certain part, could receive into her bosom the corn which Boaz gave her" (*Schröder*, De vestit. mul. p. 264). *Six* (measures of) *barley:* the measure is not given. According to the Targum and the Rabbins, it was six seahs = two ephahs. This is certainly incorrect; for Ruth would not have been able to carry that quantity of barley home. When Boaz had given her the barley he measured out, and had sent her away, he also went into the city. This is the correct rendering, as given by the *Chaldee*, to the words וַיָּבֹא הָעִיר; though Jerome referred the words to Ruth, but certainly without any reason, as יָבֹא cannot stand for תָּבֹא. This reading is no doubt found in some of the MSS., but it merely owes its origin to a mistaken interpretation of the words.—Vers. 16–18. When Ruth returned home, her mother-in-law asked her, "*Who art thou?*" *i.e.* as what person, in what circumstances dost thou come? The real meaning is, What hast thou accomplished? Whereupon she related all that the man had done (cf. vers. 10–14), and that he had given her six measures of barley for her mother. The Masorites have supplied אֵלַי after אָמַר, as at ver. 5, but without any necessity. The mother-in-law drew from this the hope that Boaz would now certainly carry out the matter to the desired end. "*Sit still,*" *i.e.* remain quietly at home (see Gen. xxxviii. 11), "*till thou hearest how the affair turn out,*" namely, whether the nearer redeemer mentioned by Boaz, or Boaz himself, would grant her the Levirate marriage. The expression "fall," in this sense, is founded upon the idea of the falling of the lot to the ground; it is different in Ezra vii. 20. "*For the man will not rest unless he has carried the affair to an end this day.*" כִּי־אִם, except that, as in Lev. xxii. 6, etc. (see *Ewald*, § 356, *b.*).

## BOAZ MARRIES RUTH.—CHAP. IV.

To redeem the promise he had given to Ruth, Boaz went the next morning to the gate of the city, and calling to the nearer redeemer as he passed by, asked him, before the elders of the city, to redeem the piece of land which belonged to Elimelech and had been sold by Naomi; and if he did this, at the same time to marry Ruth, to establish the name of the deceased upon his inheritance (vers. 1–5). But as he renounced the right of redemption on account of the condition attached to the redemption of the field, Boaz undertook the redemption before the assembled people, together with the obligation to marry Ruth (vers. 6–12). The marriage was blessed with a son, who became the father of Jesse, the father of David (vers. 13–17). The book closes with a genealogical proof of the descent of David from Perez (vers. 18–22).

Vers. 1–5. "*Boaz had gone up to the gate, and had sat down there.*" This circumstantial clause introduces the account of the further development of the affair. The gate, *i.e.* the open space before the city gate, was the forum of the city, the place where the public affairs of the city were discussed. The expression "went up" is not to be understood as signifying that Boaz went up from the threshing-floor where he had slept to the city, which was situated upon higher ground, for, according to chap. iii. 15, he had already gone to the city before he went up to the gate; but it is to be explained as referring to the place of justice as an ideal eminence to which a man went up (*vid.* Deut. xvii. 8). The redeemer, of whom Boaz had spoken—that is to say, the nearer relation of Elimelech—then went past, and Boaz requested him to come near and sit down. סוּר as in Gen. xix. 2, etc.: "*Sit down here, such a one.*" פְּלֹנִי אַלְמֹנִי, any one, a certain person, whose name is either unknown or not thought worth mentioning (cf. 1 Sam. xxi. 3, 2 Kings vi. 8). Boaz would certainly call him by his name; but the historian had either not heard the name, or did not think it necessary to give it.—Ver. 2. Boaz then called ten of the elders of the city as witnesses of the business to be taken in hand, and said to the redeemer in their presence, "*The piece of field which belonged to our brother* (*i.e.* our relative) *Elimelech* (as an hereditary family possession), *Naomi has sold, and I have thought* (*lit.* 'I said,' *sc.* to myself; cf. Gen. xvii. 17, xxvii. 41), *I will open thine ear* (*i.e.* make it known, disclose it): *get it before those who sit here, and* (indeed) *before the elders of my people.*" As the field had been sold

to another, getting it (קְנָה) could only be accomplished by virtue of the right of redemption. Boaz therefore proceeded to say, "*If thou wilt redeem, redeem; but if thou wilt not redeem, tell me, that I may know it: for there is not beside thee* (any one more nearly entitled) *to redeem, and I am* (the next) *after thee.*" הַיֹּשְׁבִים is rendered by many, those dwelling, and supposed to refer to the inhabitants of Bethlehem. But we could hardly think of the inhabitants generally as present, as the word "before" would require, even if, according to ver. 9, there were a number of persons present besides the elders. Moreover they would not have been mentioned first, but, like "*all the people*" in ver. 9, would have been placed after the elders as the principal witnesses. On these grounds, the word must be taken in the sense of sitting, and, like the verb in ver. 2, be understood as referring to the elders present; and the words "before the elders of my people" must be regarded as explanatory. The expression יִגְאַל (third pers.) is striking, as we should expect the second person, which is not only found in the Septuagint, but also in several codices, and is apparently required by the context. It is true that the third person may be defended, as it has been by *Seb. Schmidt* and others, on the assumption that Boaz turned towards the elders and uttered the words as addressed to them, and therefore spoke of the redeemer as a third person: "*But if he, the redeemer there, will not redeem.*" But as the direct appeal to the redeemer himself is resumed immediately afterwards, the supposition, to our mind at least, is a very harsh one. The person addressed said, "*I will redeem.*" Boaz then gave him this further explanation (ver. 5): "*On the day that thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou buyest it of the hand of Ruth the Moabitess, of the wife of the deceased* (Mahlon, the rightful heir of the field), *to set up* (that thou mayest set up) *the name of the deceased upon his inheritance.*" From the meaning and context, the form קניתי must be the second pers. masc.; the *yod* at the end no doubt crept in through an error of the pen, or else from a ו, so that the word is either to be read קָנִיתָ (according to the *Keri*) or קְנִיתוֹ, "*thou buyest it.*" So far as the fact itself was concerned, the field, which Naomi had sold from want, was the hereditary property of her deceased husband, and ought therefore to descend to her sons according to the standing rule of right; and in this respect, therefore, it was Ruth's property quite as much as Naomi's. From the negotiation between Boaz and the nearer redeemer, it is very evident that Naomi had sold the field which was the hereditary property of her husband, and was

lawfully entitled to sell it. But as landed property did not descend to wives according to the Israelitish law, but only to children, and when there were no children, to the nearest relatives of the husband (Num. xxvii. 8–11), when Elimelech died his field properly descended to his sons; and when they died without children, it ought to have passed to his nearest relations. Hence the question arises, what right had Naomi to sell her husband's field as her own property? The Rabbins suppose that the field had been presented to Naomi and Ruth by their husbands (*vid. Selden*, de success. in bona def. c. 15). But Elimelech could not lawfully give his hereditary property to his wife, as he left sons behind him when he died, and they were the lawful heirs; and Mahlon also had no more right than his father to make such a gift. There is still less foundation for the opinion that Naomi was an heiress, since even if this were the case, it would be altogether inapplicable to the present affair, where the property in question was not a field which Naomi had inherited from her father, but the field of Elimelech and his sons. The true explanation is no doubt the following: The law relating to the inheritance of the landed property of Israelites who died childless did not determine the time when such a possession should pass to the relatives of the deceased, whether immediately after the death of the owner, or not till after the death of the widow who was left behind (*vid.* Num. xxvii. 9 sqq.). No doubt the latter was the rule established by custom, so that the widow remained in possession of the property as long as she lived; and for that length of time she had the right to sell the property in case of need, since the sale of a field was not an actual sale of the field itself, but simply of the yearly produce until the year of jubilee. Consequently the field of the deceased Elimelech would, strictly speaking, have belonged to his sons, and after their death to Mahlon's widow, since Chilion's widow had remained behind in her own country Moab. But as Elimelech had not only emigrated with his wife and children and died abroad, but his sons had also been with him in the foreign land, and had married and died there, the landed property of their father had not descended to them, but had remained the property of Naomi, Elimelech's widow, in which Ruth, as the widow of the deceased Mahlon, also had a share. Now, in case a widow sold the field of her deceased husband for the time that it was in her possession, on account of poverty, and a relation of her husband redeemed it, it was evidently his duty not only to care for the maintenance of the impoverished widow, but if

she were still young, to marry her, and to let the first son born of such a marriage enter into the family of the deceased husband of his wife, so as to inherit the redeemed property, and perpetuate the name and possession of the deceased in Israel. Upon this right, which was founded upon traditional custom, Boaz based this condition, which he set before the nearer redeemer, that if he redeemed the field of Naomi he must also take Ruth, with the obligation to marry her, and through this marriage to set up the name of the deceased upon his inheritance.

Vers. 6–13. The redeemer admitted the justice of this demand, from which we may see that the thing passed as an existing right in the nation. But as he was not disposed to marry Ruth, he gave up the redemption of the field.—Ver. 6. "*I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance.*" The redemption would cost money, since the yearly produce of the field would have to be paid for up to the year of jubilee. Now, if he acquired the field by redemption as his own permanent property, he would have increased by so much his own possessions in land. But if he should marry Ruth, the field so redeemed would belong to the son whom he would beget through her, and he would therefore have parted with the money that he had paid for the redemption merely for the son of Ruth, so that he would have withdrawn a certain amount of capital from his own possession, and to that extent have detracted from its worth. "*Redeem thou for thyself my redemption*," *i.e.* the field which I have the first right to redeem.—Vers. 7, 8. This declaration he confirmed by what was a usual custom at that time in renouncing a right. This early custom is described in ver. 7, and there its application to the case before us is mentioned afterwards. "*Now this was* (took place) *formerly in Israel in redeeming and exchanging, to confirm every transaction: A man took off his shoe and gave it to another, and this was a testimony in Israel.*" From the expression "*formerly*," and also from the description given of the custom in question, it follows that it had gone out of use at the time when our book was composed. The custom itself, which existed among the Indians and the ancient Germans, arose from the fact that fixed property was taken possession of by treading upon the soil, and hence taking off the shoe and handing it to another was a symbol of the transfer of a possession or right of ownership (see the remarks on Deut. xxv. 9 and my Bibl. Archäol. ii. p. 66). The *Piel* קִיֵּם is rarely met with in Hebrew; in the present instance it was probably taken from the old legal phraseology.

The only other places in which it occurs are Ezek. xiii. 6, Ps. cxix. 28, 106, and the book of Esther, where it is used more frequently as a Chaldaism.—Vers. 9, 10. After the nearest redeemer had thus renounced the right of redemption with all legal formality, Boaz said to the elders and all the (rest of the) people, "*Ye are witnesses this day, that I have acquired this day all that belonged to Elimelech, and to Mahlon and Chilion* (*i.e.* the field of Elimelech, which was the rightful inheritance of his sons Mahlon and Chilion), *at the hand of Naomi; and also Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, I have acquired as my wife, to raise up the name of the deceased upon his inheritance, that the name of the deceased may not be cut off among his brethren and from the gate of his people*" (*i.e.* from his native town Bethlehem; cf. chap. iii. 11). On the fact itself, see the introduction to chap. iii.; also the remarks on the Levirate marriages at Deut. xxv. 5 sqq.—Ver. 11. The people and the elders said, "*We are witnesses*," and desired for Boaz the blessing of the Lord upon this marriage. For Boaz had acted as unselfishly as he had acted honourably in upholding a laudable family custom in Israel. The blessing desired is the greatest blessing of marriage: "*The Lord make the woman that shall come into thine house* (the participle בָּאָה refers to what is immediately about to happen) *like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel* ("build" as in Gen. xvi. 2, xxx. 3); *and do thou get power in Ephratah, and make to thyself a name in Bethlehem.*" עֲשֵׂה חַיִל does not mean "get property or wealth," as in Deut. viii. 17, but get *power*, as in Ps. lx. 14 (cf. Prov. xxxi. 29), *sc.* by begetting and training worthy sons and daughters. "*Make thee a name*," literally "call out a name." The meaning of this phrase, which is only used here in this peculiar manner, must be the following: "Make to thyself a well-established name through thy marriage with Ruth, by a host of worthy sons who shall make thy name renowned."—Ver. 12. "*May thy house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah*" (Gen. xxxviii.). It was from *Perez* that the ancestors of Boaz, enumerated in vers. 18 sqq. and 1 Chron. ii. 5 sqq., were descended. As from Perez, so also from the seed which Jehovah would give to Boaz through Ruth, there should grow up a numerous posterity.

Vers. 13–17. This blessing began very speedily to be fulfilled. When Boaz had married Ruth, Jehovah gave her conception, and she bare a son.—Ver. 14. At his birth the women said to Naomi, "*Blessed be the Lord, who hath not let a redeemer be wanting to thee*

*to-day*." This redeemer was not Boaz, but the son just born. They called him a redeemer of Naomi, not because he would one day redeem the whole of Naomi's possessions (*Carpzov*, *Rosenmüller*, etc.), but because as the son of Ruth he was also the son of Naomi (ver. 17), and as such would take away the reproach of childlessness from her, would comfort her, and tend her in her old age, and thereby become her true *goël*, *i.e.* her deliverer (*Bertheau*). "*And let his name be named in Israel*," *i.e.* let the boy acquire a celebrated name, one often mentioned in Israel.—Ver. 15. "*And may the boy come to thee a refresher of the soul, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, who loveth thee* (who hath left her family, her home, and her gods, out of love to thee), *hath born him; she is better to thee than seven sons*." *Seven*, as the number of the works of God, is used to denote a large number of sons of a mother whom God has richly blessed with children (*vid.* 1 Sam. ii. 5). A mother of so many sons was to be congratulated, inasmuch as she not only possessed in these sons a powerful support to her old age, but had the prospect of the permanent continuance of her family. Naomi, however, had a still more valuable treasure in her mother-in-law, inasmuch as through her the loss of her own sons had been supplied in her old age, and the prospect was now presented to her of becoming in her childless old age the tribe-mother of a numerous and flourishing family.—Ver. 16. Naomi therefore adopted this grandson as her own child; she took the boy into her bosom, and became his nurse.—Ver. 17. And the neighbours said, "*A son is born to Naomi*," and gave him the name of *Obed*. This name was given to the boy (the context suggests this) evidently with reference to what he was to become to his grandmother. *Obed*, therefore, does not mean "servant of Jehovah" (*Targum*), but "*the serving one*," as one who lived entirely for his grandmother, and would take care of her, and rejoice her heart (*O. v. Gerlach*, after *Josephus*, Ant. v. 9, 4). The last words of ver. 17, "*he is the father of Jesse, the father of David*," show the object which the author kept in view in writing down these events, or composing the book itself. This conjecture is raised into a certainty by the genealogy which follows, and with which the book closes.

Vers. 18–20. "*These are the generations of Perez*," *i.e.* the families descended from Perez in their genealogical order (*toledoth*: see at Gen. ii. 4). The genealogy only goes back as far as *Perez*, because he was the founder of the family of Judah which was named after him (Num. xxvi. 20), and to which Elimelech and Boaz belonged.

*Perez*, a son of Judah by Tamar (Gen. xxxviii. 29), begat *Hezrom*, who is mentioned in Gen. xlvi. 12 among the sons of Judah who emigrated with Jacob into Egypt, although (as we have shown in our comm. on the passage) he was really born in Egypt. Of this son *Ram* (called *Aram* in the *Sept. Cod. Al.*, and from that in Matt. i. 3) nothing further is known, as he is only mentioned again in 1 Chron. ii. 9. His son *Amminadab* was the father-in-law of Aaron, who had married his daughter (Ex. vi. 23), and the father of *Nahesson* (*Nahshon*), the tribe-prince of the house of Judah in the time of Moses (Num. i. 7, ii. 3, vii. 12). According to this there are only four or five generations to the 430 years spent by the Israelites in Egypt, if we include both Perez and Nahesson; evidently not enough for so long a time, so that some of the intermediate links must have been left out even here. But the omission of unimportant members becomes still more apparent in the statement which follows, viz. that Nahshon begat *Salmah*, and Salmah *Boaz*, in which only two generations are given for a space of more than 250 years, which intervened between the death of Moses and the time of Gideon. *Salmah* (שַׂלְמָה or שַׂלְמָא, 1 Chron. ii. 11) is called *Salmon* in ver. 21; a double form of the name, which is to be explained from the fact that *Salmah* grew out of *Salmon* through the elision of the *n*, and that the terminations *an* and *on* are used promiscuously, as we may see from the form שִׂרְיָה in Job xli. 18 when compared with שִׂרְיֹן in 1 Kings xxii. 34, and שִׂרְיוֹן in 1 Sam. xvii. 5, 38 (see *Ewald*, § 163–4). According to the genealogy of Christ in Matt. i. 5, Salmon married Rahab; consequently he was a son, or at any rate a grandson, of Nahshon, and therefore all the members between Salmon and Boaz have been passed over. Again, the generations from Boaz to David (vers. 21, 22) may possibly be complete, although in all probability one generation has been passed over even here between Obed and Jesse (see p. 471). It is also worthy of notice that the whole chain from *Perez* to *David* consists of ten links, five of which (from Perez to Nahshon) belong to the 430 years of the sojourn in Egypt, and five (from Salmon to David) to the 476 years between the exodus from Egypt and the death of David. This symmetrical division is apparently as intentional as the limitation of the whole genealogy to ten members, for the purpose of stamping upon it through the number ten as the seal of completeness the character of a perfect, concluded, and symmetrical whole.

The genealogy closes with David, an evident proof that the

book was intended to give a family picture from the life of the pious ancestors of this great and godly king of Israel. But for us the history which points to David acquires a still higher signification, from the fact that all the members of the genealogy of David whose names occur here are also found in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. "The passage is given by Matthew word for word in the genealogy of Christ, that we may see that this history looks not so much to David as to Jesus Christ, who was proclaimed by all as the Saviour and Redeemer of the human race, and that we may learn with what wonderful compassion the Lord raises up the lowly and despised to the greatest glory and majesty" (*Brentius*).

THE END.

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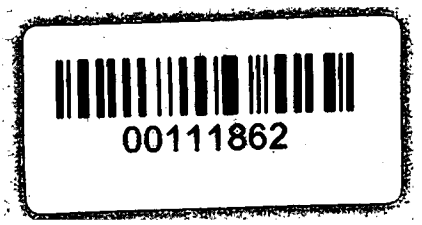
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